

Indyk: 'Explosion' if embassy moved

HILLEL KUTTLER

WASHINGTON - US Ambassador-Designate to Israel Martin Indyk yesterday warned Congress that compelling the administration to move the US Embassy to Jerusalem could destroy the peace process.

Congressional leaders have recently written to President Bill Clinton urging the move.

But in his appearance before the Senate foreign relations subcommittee considering his nomination, Indyk said that the United States "should do nothing to undermine or preempt" the final status negotiations over Jerusalem.

"Any move now, I believe very strongly, would explode the peace process," he said. "To take action now that would in one way or another force the administration's hand would, frankly, would put us out of business as a facilitator for those negotiations."

Indyk, alluding to his earlier

prepared remarks in which he detailed his deep attachment to Israel, added: "Let me say on just a personal basis, Jerusalem is important to me, too, but I do not feel at all conflicted giving you the answer I have given you."

Although diplomatic negotiations are generally routine, Indyk's appearance ran 90 minutes and resembled a broad hearing on the Middle East and the peace process.

A potentially damaging matter arose earlier in the day, when reporters here received faxed comments that Indyk, an Australian-born Jew, allegedly made in 1989, calling Israelis "paranoid" and "arrogant," and assuming "the other side is going to screw them."

But Near East subcommittee chairman Hank Brown, who presided over the hearing, called the quotes "unsubstantiated rumors," and said he had been assured the allegations have "no credibility."

Likud labels summit a 'staged event'

SARAH HONIG

THE four-way Cairo summit was dismissed by the Likud as a "staged event," with MK Ze'ev Begin describing it as "geared to rattle-dazzle public opinion and cover up the abysmal failure of the so-called peace process."

"The only one who can benefit from this summit is the arch-terrorist Arafat," Begin said last night.

"He is the greatest lucifer to terror. Only a few days ago he alluded to the suicide bombers by declaring: 'We are all martyrs.' He chided those who sent the suicide bombers for disclosing the names and places of residence of the bombers."

"Arafat didn't mind their bloody deeds, but he objected to leaving traces which led to his field. He also complained that Israel imposes a closure on Gaza over 'very little thing.' The slaughter at Beit Lid is, according to Arafat, 'a little thing.' This is our peace partner, and continuing negotiations with him can only escalate terror under his

auspices."

Former foreign minister David Levy called the summit "a pitiful gathering of four disappointed and frustrated men, who, each for his own domestic considerations, needs a bit of media sparkle to refurbish a tarnished image."

According to Levy, "What this government's leaders say seems to come from another planet. Israel is the only side that fulfills its end of the Oslo bargain, but when it dares protect its citizens from terrorist murders, the Egyptians accuse us of thereby impeding peace and encouraging terror."

"This is too sickeningly absurd to be believed."

Likud MK Tzahi Hanegbi referred to the summit as "the Cairo Circus. The only positive thing which can be said about this artificial and ludicrous photo opportunity is that it doesn't excite the Israeli public. People have learned to grow apathetic to such extravagant spectacles."



Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, Jordan's King Hussein, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, and PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat before their 'ifta' meal. (AP)

Rabin joins Mubarak in Ramadan feast

DAVID MAKOVSKY

CAIRO

PRIME Minister Yitzhak Rabin had a unique Middle Eastern experience yesterday, perhaps symbolically signaling a new phase of Israeli acceptance in the region.

Rabin was invited by Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak to join other Middle Eastern leaders in iftar, the traditional break-the-fast feast Moslems eat every evening during the holy month of Ramadan.

Before the summit began, Mubarak hosted a meal for a few dozen people, including the sum-

mit participants, their top aides, and members of Egypt's ruling elite.

As the chant of the muezzin wafted over Cairo's minarets at sunset, those assembled at the iftar listened to verses from the Koran: "For you, God, I fast; from your abundance, I eat. There is no more thirst, and the veins are now flowing."

At that point, the participants dipped the customary dates into milk and ate them, then drank a glass of water, in keeping with what Mohammed did, according to Moslem tradition. They then had a sumptuous feast.

Several dozen people attended the dinner. At the head table sat Rabin, Hussein, Mubarak, and Arafat, in that order.

According to an Egyptian source, Arafat was left out of the dinner conversation most of the time.

Peres: NPT row with Egypt near solution

Jerusalem Post Staff

FOREIGN Minister Shimon Peres said yesterday Israel and Egypt are close to resolving a dispute over Israel's refusal to sign an international treaty to limit nuclear weapons.

"I believe that a solution is pending, that we have already solved or are on the way to solving this crisis," Peres told 4TV's Channel 1 before leaving for the Cairo summit.

Relations between Egypt and

Israel have been strained over Cairo's demand that Israel sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), which comes up for extension in April.

Asked what the solution entailed, Peres said: "It doesn't include Israel signing the treaty." Meanwhile, Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Moussa has charged that Israel is to blame for

the increase in Palestinian violence, because, he said, Jerusalem has delayed the peace process.

In an interview with *The New York Times* on Wednesday, Moussa said Israel had failed to abide by the peace agreement, which had eroded the authority of Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat and led to increased terrorism by Islamic militants.

Summit wins US kudos

HILLEL KUTTLER

WASHINGTON

THE US sees yesterday's Cairo summit as important for two reasons, a senior administration official said yesterday.

"First, you have the four core parties coming together at a time when the only voices you hear are those of extremism," he said. "Second, it's clear this should lead to a variety of different steps... both political and economic in the region."

He said the US also credits Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak for hosting the summit, since "he understood the importance of putting it together."

The US has pursued the idea with Mubarak "since the situation deteriorated" following the Beit Lid bombing, and while "we can't claim full credit... we had input," the official said.

As to where this leaves the one party conspicuously absent - Syria - the official noted that since Damascus and Jerusalem are not currently negotiating, it was obvious why the Syrians wouldn't be in Cairo.

"Syria was briefed on this

[summit], probably by the Egyptians. They may not like it, or they may see it as affirming the reality that the process is moving ahead," the official said, adding that the US hadn't discussed the summit with Syria.

Meanwhile, Israeli-Syrian talks now appear to be back on for late next week, an Israeli official said yesterday.

Syria has now told the administration - "officially, it now seems" - that Ambassador Walid Muelem, who has been in Damascus the past month, will return here tomorrow or Sunday, the official said. The US will then consult with him on what it sees as Damascus's credibility problem in the talks, while terrorist groups such as Islamic Jihad continue to operate out of that city.

"Syria has to iron out several wrinkles" with the US prior to its holding talks with Israeli Ambassador Itamar Rabinovich, the official said, adding that if those meetings do resume, "they will be, tentatively, at the end of next week."

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IDF starts 'taxi diplomacy' in Lebanon

DAVID RUDGE

A NOTE delivered by taxi from the IDF to the Lebanese authorities north of the security zone has opened a new channel of communications between the two countries, although on somewhat less than the diplomatic level.

The note, according to Lebanese newspapers, complained that Lebanese Army troops at checkpoints in southern Lebanon were harassing residents of the zone traveling to and from the region.

The newspaper reports said the IDF message warned Lebanese officials that countermeasures would be taken that would "harm the interests of the Lebanese government" unless the harassment ceased.

SYRIA

(Continued from Page One) not been caused by any expansion of Jewish settlements or Israeli unwillingness to move forward. The Rabin government is ready to withdraw from most of Judea and Samaria and to schedule Palestinian elections. All the details of these steps can be resolved.

Delay is really caused by the Palestinian Authority's unwillingness or inability to do a better job in reducing anti-Israel terrorism. These attacks do not come from people outraged by Israel's settlement construction or Israel's slowness in implementing the agreements, but from those who reject the peace process - no matter what the pace - and Israel's very existence.

Consequently, the current pause is not a sign of full-scale collapse, but a necessary part of the diplomatic process. Israel wants to show Arafat that he must meet its needs if he wants to make any further gain. Showing Israel's ability to integrate into the region - with or without the cooperation of Arafat or Syrian President Hafez Assad - may help that effort.

Berry Rubin is a senior fellow at Bar-Ilan University's BESA center, and author of its just-published study, *The New Middle East: Opportunities and Risks*.

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Rabbi Benjamin Cohen ז"ל
 will take place on Friday, February 10 at 10 a.m.
 at the Mount of Olives Cemetery.
 For information and transportation,
 call 02-424615 or 02-245049

We regret to announce the passing of our beloved
 husband and father
SHELDON MEIR KATZ
 The funeral took place on February 2, 1995
 (2 Adar Alef, 5755).
 Shiva at his home in Elkana.
 The Family

On Wednesday, February 1, 1995
 (1 Adar Alef, 5755)

EDITH BOROVOY ז"ל
 passed away.

The funeral was held the same day.
 Shiva at 7/1 Pinsky Street, Herzliya.
 The Family

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for
**The Very Rev.
 Dr. ROBERT CRAIG, C.B.E.**

will be held on Sunday, February 5, 1995 at 6:30 p.m.

Dr. Craig passed away peacefully on January 30, 1995.

Dr. Craig was minister of St. Andrew's Jerusalem 1980-85,
 and Moderator of the General Assembly in 1986.

IN LOVING REMEMBRANCE

The Near East Ministry mourns the death of
WIDAD VAN DER HOEVEN
 (wife of Jan Willem van der Hoeven, founder of the NEM)

Through her words and deeds
 she showed that Jews and Arabs
 can be reconciled in the Messiah of Israel.

We are grateful for everything she has done for the NEM.
 The NEM family in the Netherlands and in the Middle East.

Charles Levine Communications
 deeply mourns the passing of

WIDAD

a true daughter of her people.

May Jan Willem and the children be
 comforted amongst the mourners of Zion.

The Management of The Jerusalem Post
 deeply mourns the passing of

WIDAD VAN DER HOEVEN

wife of Jan Willem van der Hoeven



International Christian Embassy Jerusalem

השגרירות הנוצרית הבינלאומית בירושלים

In loving remembrance and sorrow,
 we announce the passing of

WIDAD VAN DER HOEVEN

beloved wife of the Spokesman of the
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As a Christian Arab, she deeply loved Israel.

A memorial service will take place at the
 Jerusalem Baptist House,
 4 Narkiss Street,
 at 4 p.m. on Monday, February 6, 1995.

Rabin deciding on closure end today

ALON PINKAS

PRIME Minister Yitzhak Rabin is to meet with top security officials today to decide whether to continue the closure imposed on the territories after the Beit Lid attack on January 22.

Other participants are to include Chief of General Staff Lt.-Gen. Amnon Shahak, his deputy, Maj.-Gen. Matan Vilnai, OC Southern Command Maj.-Gen. Shaul Mofaz, OC Central Command Maj.-Gen. Ilan Biran, outgoing Coordinator of Activities in the Territories Maj.-Gen. Danny Rothschild and the head of the General Security Service.

The decision will probably be affected by yesterday's Cairo summit, at which PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak urged Rabin to lift the closure.

Some in the IDF also believe that a partial lifting is called for, mainly for economic reasons.

"With the beginning of Ramadan, Gaza breadwinners will be unable to provide necessities for the holiday. That increases the pressure-cooker effect in the territories and serves Hamas, which will portray Arafat as weak and incapable of delivering political achievements from the Cairo summit," a security source said.

Others, however, are inclined to recommend the closure be continued, because of the likelihood of attacks during Ramadan.

Palestinians protest road work near Hashmonaim

HERB KEINON

SOME 40 Palestinian protesters stopped a tractor from working on a security road around the settlement of Hashmonaim yesterday, but settlement leaders said the tractor would be back, maybe today.

Mordechai Rosilio, the head of Hashmonaim, just east of the Green Line in the Modi'in region, said the group of Palestinians from the neighboring village of Midya stood in front of the tractor to keep it from moving. "We called the army," Rosilio said, "and they tried to talk to the protesters. A small confrontation broke out, and the IDF moved them."

Rosilio said the IDF asked that work be put off until Sunday to let tempers cool. But Uri Ariel, head of the Council of Jewish Communities in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza, said that work on the new road would begin today, so that the impression is not created that protesters can stop work in the settlements.

Midya resident Nabil Suleiman told Israel Radio that the land belongs to the village, and that it would fight the roadwork in the courts, through protests, and "in any way."

Rosilio said the land in question appears in the settlement's master plan, and that the courts ruled that it belongs to the settlement.

According to Rosilio, the settlement of 1,200 has never had a problem with Midya. He said the incident was an example of Palestinians making political capital "everywhere they see a tractor."

Security forces bracing for today's Ramadan prayers

BILL HUTMAN

SECURITY forces are bracing for unrest coinciding with the first Friday prayer services of Ramadan today, amid warnings by senior Palestinian figures in Jerusalem that violence will increase.

"Pressure [from the closure] will cause an explosion," said Palestinian Authority-appointed Jerusalem Mufti Akram Sabri. "A closure of the West Bank during this Ramadan holy month might cause some people to express their disagreement with such a decision."

More than 100,000 Moslems from the territories would have converged on Al Aksa Mosque today, if there were no closure. Instead, only about 30,000 Jeru-

salem Moslems are expected.

Sabri called for the immediate lifting of the closure. He said understanding the government's reasons for the closure, or condemning the Beit Lid bombing "does not concern me. That concerns the Israeli occupation authorities and the people who took the action."

"The people who are ready to sacrifice their lives in an action against the Israelis, they might be pressured in one way or another by the injustices of the occupation," Sabri added.

Meanwhile, Faisal Hussein, the senior PLO official in Jerusa-

lem, warned a "new intifada" would erupt if Israel does not halt plans to build a Jewish neighborhood at Har Homa in the capital.

Hussein said settlement activity undermines support for the peace process and boosts the Islamic militants.

"If the PLO loses the leadership, the only ones who can assume this role are the fundamentalists," Hussein told Army Radio. "If this happens, we will witness a new uprising and no one will be able to stop it."

Police Minister Moshe Shahal visited the Temple Mount yesterday to check the security prepara-

tions for today's Ramadan prayers, and to review measures taken elsewhere in the capital.

He said he expects the closure would begin to be lifted gradually by next week, allowing Moslem worshippers from the territories to pray at Al Aksa Mosque.

However, Shahal cautioned that the government's foremost responsibility is security, even if this means denying worshippers access to Al Aksa.

"I realize the majority are doing no harm. But the few that carry out attacks take advantage of the open borders used by everyone," Shahal said.

Shahal later visited the Machpela Cave in Hebron.



Police Minister Moshe Shahal chats with soldiers at the Western Wall plaza yesterday.

(Brian Hender)

Saudis pledge \$30m. to boost Palestinians' standing in Jerusalem

BILL HUTMAN

SAUDI Arabia has promised senior PLO official Faisal Hussein some \$30 million to help strengthen the Palestinians' economic and political standing in Jerusalem, Palestinian sources said yesterday.

The Saudis also promised Hussein - who has been to Saudi Arabia several times over the past few months to raise funds - another \$12 million for the Palestinian Authority, the sources said.

Hussein pushed hard for the funding to help the cash-strapped Palestinian institutions in Jerusalem, including Orient House, the PLO headquarters, which he runs.

The funds will also be used for housing.

This is meant as an attempt to gain leverage in future talks regarding the city's status.

The Saudi money for Jerusalem is to come in four installments, with the Saudi government keeping a close watch to

ensure the funding is used properly. Hussein was quoted as saying in the eastern Jerusalem daily *Al-Kuds*.

Hussein said the money will be deposited by the Saudi government in the Islamic Development Bank in Jeddah, and distributed by the Jerusalem Fund, which he heads.

The sources noted that Hussein wanted to circumvent the PA and receive the money directly, out of concern it would never reach Jerusalem if it went through Gaza.

Hussein convinced the Saudis the money would all be strictly accounted for and used for a list of development projects, which he presented them during his visits.

Saudi Prime Minister Saud Faisal and Riyadh Governor Salman bin Abdul Aziz were reportedly the key Saudi figures who negotiated with Hussein.

Hussein and his spokesman were unavailable for comment yesterday.

Court: State not obligated to return terrorist's body

EVELYN GORDON

THE government is not obligated to restore the body of a terrorist to his family, the High Court of Justice said yesterday.

The ruling was in response to a petition by the family of Hassan Abbas, one of the Hamas terrorists responsible for the shooting attack in Jerusalem's Nahalat Shiva neighborhood last October. The state has refused to return the body to the family unless it receives the body of soldier Ilan Sa'adon, also murdered by Hamas, in exchange.

Attorney Andre Rosenthal, representing the Abbas family, said the family has no contact with Hamas, and thus cannot help in the return of Sa'adon's body. Therefore, he said, out of respect for the dead and consideration for the family's feelings, Abbas's body should be returned.

However, Nili Arad, head of the Justice Ministry's High Court division, responded that respect for the dead and consideration for the family apply equally well to Sa'adon's case. Furthermore, because he was a soldier, the state has an added responsibility to him, she said, and must use any means at its disposal to get

his body back.

The body of Sallah Jedala, one of the kidnappers of Nahson Wachsmann, is being kept for the same purpose, she said.

Justices Meir Shamgar, Dov Levine, and Tova Strasberg-Cohen accepted Arad's argument, saying this is no different than keeping live prisoners for an exchange.

Furthermore, the justices said, there is a security risk in returning the bodies to Gaza, where Hamas could use the funeral to incite more acts of terror. While in the past, the army could have determined the funeral route, its time, and the number of people allowed to attend, today, the army has no authority in Gaza.

"It is accepted - not just in Israel - that the government prevent mass funerals with political implications," Shamgar said.

Regarding the family's connections with Hamas, Arad offered to submit classified evidence showing such ties do exist, but Rosenthal objected, and the justices decided it was not necessary. Since Hamas sent Abbas and Hamas has Sa'adon's body, they said, trying to make a trade is logical.

Court restores conviction of father who abused daughter

EVELYN GORDON

THE Supreme Court yesterday overturned itself to convict a man of sexually abusing his daughter, saying the girl could not be considered to have consented to the acts.

The case involved a Bnei Brak resident who allegedly sexually abused his two young daughters. Some six years later the girls filed a complaint against him, and in 1992 he was convicted by the Tel Aviv District Court of aggravated sexual assault.

In 1993, however, the Supreme Court overturned the ruling. While the man was certainly guilty of a lesser charge, the court

ruled, he could not be convicted on this charge, because the statute of limitations for a misdemeanor - which is five years - had expired.

The state accepted the ruling with regard to one daughter, but asked for a second hearing before an expanded panel of justices on the acquittal regarding the other daughter.

The acquittal had been based on the claim that the daughter - aged 10 and 11 during the two-year period during which the acts occurred - could have refused,

but did not.

The proof of this, the justices had said, was that she successfully refused in one case - she would not take off her underpants - and nothing bad had happened to her as a consequence.

By a vote of 3-2, the expanded panel yesterday reversed this decision.

All five of the justices - Ya'acov Kedmi, Aharon Barak, Mishael Cheshin, Shlomo Levine, and Theodore Orr - agreed with the state that experience, as detailed in the professional literature, shows that the dependent relationship of a child to a parent usually makes the child psychologically incapable of refusing a parent's sexual advances.

Thus, the presumption in such a case is that the child was forced to consent, unless proven otherwise.

Levine and Orr, the majority in the original panel, had said the facts in this case did prove otherwise, since the girl had successfully refused in one instance.

But Kedmi, Barak, and Cheshin disagreed.

Not all acts of sexual abuse are equal, they said; some are worse than others. Thus the fact that the girl, faced with what for her was the extreme demand of removing her underpants, mustered the courage to refuse, does not mean that she was emotionally capable of refusing her father's other, earlier advances, they said.

According to the indictment, the man had lain naked in bed with her and taken showers with her while touching her in a sexual manner.

The acts were always committed when her mother was out of the house, and she was warned never to mention them to her mother.

Originally, the district court had sentenced the man to two-and-a-half years in jail. However, because of the relatively long time which has elapsed, the fact that the Supreme Court originally acquitted him, and the principle of not applying the full severity of the law on an appeal, the justices decided to limit his sentence to the eight months he had served before being acquitted on appeal.

It is with great sorrow that we announce the passing of our beloved
TOVA (Trudi) SCHNEIDER

The funeral will take place today, Friday, February 3, 1995,
 at the Flamen Hasharon Cemetery, at 12 p.m.

The mourners:
 Husband: **Solly Schneider**
 The children: **Gila Schneider**
Jeff and Didi Schneider
Sandy and Yigal Freiman
Esti and Nir Ishtein

And the grandchildren

150 מיליון

Russia claims main Chechen force defeated

MOSCOW (AP) - Russian forces in Chechnya have seized control of three of Grozny's four districts but still have a long way to go, the commander of Interior Ministry troops said yesterday.

"The turning point has not been reached, but there are signs of it," Interior Ministry Gen. Anatoly Kulikov said. "This means the army has fulfilled its main objective. It has routed the main [rebel] armed forces."

Kulikov also claimed Russian forces now control most of northern Chechnya.

"Not being controlled yet is the south of the republic and [the town of] Gudermes," he said at a news conference.

The fighting continued yesterday, with Russian troops continuing to shell Chechen positions in Grozny, the Chechen capital.

Russian Defense Minister Pavel Grachev, who recently handed over control of the operation to Kulikov, was hospitalized for a routine army physical, officials said yesterday. He is the second major official in charge of the Chechnya war to go to the hospital in the past week.

Grachev, 48, has been bitterly ridiculed for saying he could take Grozny in two hours with a single paratrooper regiment. Instead, tens of thousands of Russian troops have been locked in a near static struggle with a few thousand lightly armed Chechens for almost two months.

Russian Nationalities Minister Nikolai Yegorov was hospitalized earlier with pneumonia, and the prominent daily *Izvestia* printed a front-page story yesterday speculating that both men would soon be ousted.

Many observers expect a protracted guerrilla war once Russia imposes at least nominal control over most of Chechnya. But Kulikov rejected that notion.

"There will be no drawn-out guerrilla war," he said. "There will be acts of terrorism...."

He claimed most Chechens are anxious for a Russian victory and would not back a guerrilla war. "People with tears in their eyes are waiting for the moment when all this will stop," he said.

Kulikov also acknowledged that three Russian soldiers have been charged with looting. There have been several reports of Russian looting in Grozny.

"I regret to say that this is an inseparable, dirty part of any war," he said.

Meanwhile, a new poll said the overwhelming majority of Russians oppose courts-martial for soldiers who refuse to fight in Chechnya.

Only 11 percent of the respondents in the poll of 1,353 people nationwide said they favored prosecuting soldiers who refuse to fight in Chechnya.

Seventy-four percent said they thought it would be wrong to bring charges and 15 percent had no opinion. The margin of error was 2.5 percent.



A flooded farm near the town of Tiel, Holland, shows the extent of yesterday's flooding of the River Waal. (AP)

Floods recede, threat persists

IAN GEOGHEGAN
AMSTERDAM

BLOATED rivers which had threatened to crash over weakened defenses in the Netherlands were receding so fast yesterday that they raised fresh fears that dikes could collapse like "overcooked plum puddings."

Officials said water levels along the Rhine, Waal, Maas (Meuse) and IJssel rivers were falling fast in bright sunshine, but ancient dikes, under intense pressure from flood waters for days, could still collapse.

"The situation is stable now, but that does not mean the danger is gone," Interior Minister Hans Dijkstal told parliament. "There are still several places where dikes could be breached."

Spokeswoman Louise van Kranenbeek said: "We're worried by the speed at which the water is now going down because although that removes the pressure on the bottom of the dikes, it means the heavily-soaked tops of dikes can fall inward - like an overcooked plum pudding."

Water levels at Lobith where the Rhine enters the Netherlands from Germany had fallen to 16.29 meters above sea-level by mid-afternoon from a peak of 16.66 meters on Tuesday, officials said.

They predicted that levels were likely to subside by 50 cm a day over the weekend.

Hundreds of soldiers and volunteers who labored through the

night to buttress crumbling dikes appeared to have gained the upper hand over swollen rivers.

Dutch authorities, fearing the dikes would burst, ordered about 250,000 people to abandon their homes in the country's biggest peacetime evacuation.

Convoys of lorries dumped thousands of cubic meters of sand on a dike near Ochten 20 kilometers west of Nijmegen.

The authorities said thousands of people from around Tiel had been safely moved out, although some residents tried to get back to their homes to feed animals, secure houses, pick up medicines and salvage valuables.

Police, mobilized from all over the Netherlands, said they sealed off and patrolled individual villages in the evacuated areas to allay fears that abandoned homes would be looted.

FBI agent says Jihad groups operate in five US states

NEW YORK (Reuters) - Illegal Moslem Jihad groups are operating in five US states and the fiery Egyptian cleric on trial for heading a bombing conspiracy is their "ideological" leader, an FBI agent said on Wednesday.

Harlan Bell, who is part of the FBI's terrorist task force, was the government's first witness in the case against Egyptian Sheikh Omar Abdel-Rahman and 11 others accused of plotting to bomb US landmarks and involvement in the November 1990 murder of Rabbi Meir Kahane in New York.

The government was expected to introduce evidence yesterday that FBI agents found \$61,000 in \$100 bills in Abdel-Rahman's apartment and that he had hundreds of thousands of dollars in bank accounts.

Prosecutors said they will argue the money was used to help finance the group's illegal activities.

Bell had been called to testify about a search warrant executed at the cleric's Jersey City, New Jersey, apartment across from New York City on June 24, 1993, and to identify pictures taken at

the residence. However, he went even further during cross-examination, revealing information about what the FBI believes are illegal activities being conducted by radical Moslem groups.

Prosecutors say the government believes certain Jihad groups operating in the United States are engaged in criminal activities to oppose nations, governments and individuals that do not share its interpretation of Islamic law.

They allege Abdel-Rahman is the religious leader of a Jihad army that planned to "wage a war of urban terrorism" in the United States protesting against US support of Israel and Egypt.

Defense lawyers argue Jihad is a personal struggle to do God's will.

During cross-examination by defense lawyer John Jacobs, Bell said the FBI believes there are

illegal Jihad groups operating in California, Michigan, New Jersey, New York and Texas.

"These are all people engaged in illegal activities?" Jacobs asked.

"Yes, sir," he said adding the members were either engaged in the acts themselves or aiding those who are.

Jacobs asked Bell if the cleric is the "boss of bosses."

"Sheik Rahman is the ideological leader... he gives views and is consulted for opinions," Bell said.

Jacobs asked if there were any charts of how the Jihad groups were organized and Bell said there were not.

"They are very loose organizations in which members... discuss things they want to do," said Bell.

He said they discuss the "propriety" of their planned actions with Abdel-Rahman.

LOS ANGELES (Reuters) - A day of high courtroom drama was promised for yesterday as O.J. Simpson's attorneys made it clear they would continue attacking a key prosecution witness who said the American football legend told of dreams about killing his ex-wife.

Defense attorney Carl Douglas, who electrified the court in Simpson's double murder trial on Wednesday with his scathing cross-examination of prosecution witness Ronald Shipp, promised even more legal fireworks when the trial resumed yesterday.

A day which started with lawyers wrangling over whether Shipp's testimony should be heard at all ended with a battle of wits between Douglas and Shipp with attorneys on both sides jumping up and down with objections.

In the end Shipp stuck to his recollections of Simpson telling

him he had several times killed his ex-wife, but Shipp admitted he had lied to police, had a drinking problem and had told his story to the author of a sensational book on the case before telling the authorities what he knew.

Shipp first made reference to the dreams in a book, *Raging Heart* by author Sheila Weller, which was released last week.

Shipp says in the book that during a conversation at Simpson's home the night after the murders, Simpson told him: "I was interviewed by detectives and they asked me to take a lie detector test."

Shipp then asked Simpson, "Well, what did you say?"

According to the book, Simpson chuckled and replied, "Hey, to be truthful Ron, man, I've had a lot of dreams about killing her. I really don't know about taking that thing."

Russian legislator found dead

MOSCOW (AP) - Police yesterday found the body of a parliament member who had been kidnapped from a bar outside Moscow by gunmen posing as police officers, the ITAR-Tass news agency said.

He was the third Russian lawmaker to be killed in the past 10 months.

The body of Sergei Skorochkin, an independent deputy in the lower house or parliament, was found in a forest near the village of Sarybyevo, the news agency quoted police as saying. He had been shot in the back of the head

and his hands were cuffed, the report said.

The 33-year-old Skorochkin, who also ran a private business in Zaraisk, shocked parliament last summer when he shot and killed a man who allegedly opened fire on him. A passerby also was killed in the shootout.

Prosecutors later ruled that Skorochkin was defending himself, and criminal charges were dropped.

Members of parliament have become frequent targets of violence in Russia. Many now carry weapons or have bodyguards.

Britain seeks pennies from heaven

LONDON (Reuters) - Britons were asked on Wednesday to help locate \$40 million (\$64 million) in loose change which vanished in 1994.

A Royal Mint survey estimated 450 million coins disappeared from circulation last year - most probably falling through holes in pockets, slipping down the backs of sofas or being taken abroad.

Around 3.5 percent of the six billion one-penny coins went missing, the mint said in a statement.

But Britons also had trouble hanging on to one-pound coins. More than 2.5 percent of the small, heavy pieces, worth a total of about \$25 million (\$40 million) also disappeared.

Circumcision makes boys sensitive to pain - study

LONDON (Reuters) - Circumcising baby boys may make them more sensitive to pain, Canadian doctors said in a report released today.

Dr. Gideon Koren and colleagues at the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto tested boys who were being vaccinated against diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus and flu and analyzed their response to the painful jabs.

"Circumcised boys had significantly longer crying bouts and higher pain scores," Koren wrote in the *Lancet* medical journal. "Neo-natal circumcision may affect pain response several months after the event."

Other studies have shown that the body "learns" how to feel pain, and Koren said circumcision - often a baby boy's first experience of pain - may prime them for future trauma.

"Because memory of pain is believed to be important in subsequent pain perception... it is conceivable that pain from circumcision may have long-lasting effects on pain response and/or perception," he wrote.

"Male circumcision is the most common neo-natal surgical procedure. It causes intense pain and measurable changes in behavior that last up to one day."

Koren said there seemed to be no other explanation for the different reactions from the infants. They came from diverse backgrounds and were all healthy.

"We also looked at cultural background [e.g. being Jewish] and maternal intervention on pain response. No significant associations were found," he said.

Rabbi Nachman Zucker, the Rosh Yeshiva, and the British Friends of Kfar Ganim Youth Academy have pleasure in inviting you to the Dedication Ceremony of the Rabbi Isaac Bernstein Memorial Library on Monday, February 13, 1995, at 3 p.m. at Yeshivat Kfar Ganim, 30 Yad Habanim, Petah Tikva. The ceremony will be attended by Mrs. Ruth Bernstein and members of the family.

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Ramadan perverted

WE wish believing Moslems a relaxed, peaceful, and holy month of Ramadan and a happy holiday at its conclusion. We most assuredly do not wish them the type of Ramadan advocated by the murderous terrorists of Algeria. They launched the Islamic holy month by bringing death to 42 of their coreligionists, and grief to their families and those of the 286 wounded, with a suicide car bomb in central Algiers. The victims were mostly families on pre-Ramadan shopping outings.

The scene on Amirouche Street yesterday would be hideously familiar to anyone in this country—the murder site covered in candles and flowers, sirens sounding for five minutes of memorial silence, headlines on newsstands screaming “Abominable Butchery,” “Carriage in Algiers,” “The Edge of Horror,” and “Their Aim: Destroy the Country.” If there was any need for a reminder of the universality of the victims of terrorism, this is it.

The philosophy of this criminal extremism knows no logic; its advocates have no humanity, no barbarity is beyond its capability. What seems incomprehensible at times is why so many Moslems are climbing on the platform of Islamic extremism when it has so clearly revealed its bloody hand in so many places. After all, it was the willingness of a mass of Algerians to vote for the fundamentalist parties that started the present civil war in Algeria.

The government may have made a mistake in allowing extremist parties to contest the general elections. Like the Nazis in Germany in 1933, these extremists were obviously committed to overthrowing the democratic process by which they hoped to seize power. It may be necessary to make this a red line in any democracy—a

fail-safe provision that those who would destroy democracy must be barred from using it. Democracy is flexible enough to accommodate almost every shade of political opinion that accepts the rules of the game—as countries like Britain demonstrate by cheerfully admitting raving looney parties, but strictly barring advocates of violence or racism.

Like many populist ideologies in history, Islamic fundamentalism has fed on the sins of those who already govern most of the Arab world. Democracies have a hard enough time guaranteeing their people education, work, security, justice, and the freedom to pursue happiness. Rulers who offer people a subsistence diet of bread and circuses while themselves enjoying cake and palaces have no chance at all. The IRA, Bader-Meinhoff, the Red Army Faction, and neo-Nazis have failed to win even a toe-hold in their nations' legislatures, because they are odd fish that drown in the air of democracy. Islamic extremists are thriving in seas of corruption and frustration.

While terrorism must be fought by all the means at any state's legal disposal, this is not a war the Arab states will ever win by military means alone. Even less will states such as Syria win it by gloating over the attacks of fanatics on “enemy” Israelis or Jews, as they have done after the Beit Lid massacre.

When groups like the Algerian terrorists publicly call for bloodletting during Ramadan and follow it up with the atrocity in Algiers, one can only wonder how long it will take the world's ordinary Moslems—and especially their rulers—to realize that in this conflict all are victims, all are hostages to terrorism. Unless they develop democratic institutions, we shall all be facing a new era of barbarism.

Build Har Homa

THE Jerusalem planning committee's decision to approve the immediate construction of 6,500 new housing units at Har Homa in southern Jerusalem is a welcome development. But it is bound to put the resolve of both city and government to a test.

The land on which these units will be built has been expropriated from Jews, but Arabs from the neighboring areas have threatened to stop construction. As adviser to Yasser Arafat Salah Ta'ammri, a resident of the area, put it on Wednesday, “This is our land... We shall stop the bulldozers with our bodies.”

The Jewish Gush Shalom group, which in past weeks joined Palestinian demonstrators against Jewish building in Judea and Samaria, has called the move “a gross provocation against peace.” This, despite the city's intention to build 3,500 housing units for Palestinians in the same neighborhood. Clearly, what the Palestinians and Gush Shalom fear is that the Har Homa development will prevent the eastern part of the city from becoming the capital of a Palestinian state.

There are other, non-political objections to the plan. Private developer David Myr, who has devoted 25 years to planning a construction project in the area and attracting investors, vehemently opposes government intervention. With good reason, he wonders why the

neighborhood cannot be developed strictly by private entrepreneurs.

Newly installed city engineer Uri Ben-Asher has other objections. He bitterly complains that political, rather than urban development, considerations have motivated the decision. Expressing an opinion shared by many Jerusalemites, he says the city resembles “a man with clogged arteries, all fat on the outside and a weak heart in the middle.”

His objections to the proposed Har Homa plans may be all too valid. But Jerusalem cannot be treated as just another city. In the battle to keep it undivided under Israeli rule, the building of Har Homa may be a decisive move. Whether the neighborhood becomes Jewish or mixed, it will make the division of the city virtually impossible. As committee chairman Uri Lupiansky said on Wednesday, “These plans are important for strengthening Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and the Jewish people.”

Since all appeals against the project have been rejected by the High Court, there is nothing to prevent work from beginning as soon as the city council and the district planning commission approve the plans. Now it must be hoped that neither bureaucratic impediments, nor political considerations, nor threats by Palestinian officials and their Israeli allies will hold back this enterprise.

Cairo gains and losses

MOSHE ZAK

ISRAEL is paying a high price for the “peace coalition” that met in Cairo this week. It is having to concur with the Arab states' protocol, by which Yasser Arafat has been accorded the status of a head of state.

Israel's admission fee for attending—for the first time—a regional summit was elevating President Mubarak not only to the leadership of the region, but also to the status of arbitrator in Israel-Arab disputes.

But Mubarak didn't wait for this week's summit. He had already been supporting Arafat's demands publicly during the preceding week.

At yesterday's gathering, both Egypt and the PLO were gainers. And Israel? It didn't make any headway in solving the thorny problem that was the cause of the latest crisis in Israeli-Palestinian talks. It had to be content with vague declarations.

Egypt knows that it is impossible to persuade Arafat to fight Hamas and Islamic Jihad. Before Chief of Staff Shabak revealed to the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee this week that Fatah has been involved in terrorist attacks, since Oslo, Egypt knew all about it. So Mubarak cannot be expected to pressure Arafat to accede to Israel's demands to combat terror.

Arafat's position is akin to that of the father of the Beit Lid suicide bomber. When Islamic Jihad terrorists informed Palestinian policeman Mahmoud Sukar that his 25-year-old son Anwar had died in the suicide attack, he fainted and was taken to hospital.

On recovering consciousness he told his son's friends, “Damn you. The whole Islamic Jihad can go to hell.” A few hours later he

was visited by Jihad representatives, who made it clear that he should apologize, or suffer the consequences. His loyalty to Arafat notwithstanding, the bereaved father apologized to the Islamic Jihad.

He wasn't the only one angry with the Palestinian organization. Arafat is angry with them too because, by refusing to recognize his authority, they endanger his position.

As an opening bid, he is even prepared to curse them; but he quells his anger as soon as the

jumped the gun last month and decided to activate the refugee time bomb. They initiated sessions to discuss the displaced persons issue with Egypt, Jordan and the PLO—but not with Israel.

Nothing in this sphere can be done without Israel's consent; but a united Arab front demanding the return of 8,000 refugees to Israel would have the effect of turning this problem into an additional stumbling block in the way of the political process, and a lever for international pressure on Israel.

The scales of yesterday's summit were weighted in favor of Egypt and the PLO

possible consequences of a vigorous reaction become apparent.

MUBARAK cannot influence Arafat on terror or anti-terror tactics; and of course he has no influence on the Palestinian Islamic organizations, whose Egyptian counterparts endanger his own regime. But he could at least put a stop to the activities of his own officials, who are currently attempting to erect a diplomatic front against Israel in fields ranging from the nuclear issue to the repatriation of the displaced persons from 1967.

The Oslo agreement stated that a panel made up of representatives from Jordan, the Palestinians, Egypt and Israel would discuss the status of the displaced persons. The panel's decisions must be unanimous.

But certain Egyptian officials

King Hussein described to an Israeli interlocutor how President Mubarak unintentionally caused the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. The Jordanian king had heard Saddam Hussein say he had told Mubarak, in confidence, that his threats to invade Kuwait weren't genuine, and were only intended to frighten Kuwait into submitting to Iraq's financial demands.

On his return to Cairo, Mubarak gave Saddam's secret away, and so the Kuwaiti ruler took a firmer stance—leaving Saddam no choice but to make good his threat.

Saddam's claim of “no choice” didn't justify invading a neighboring state, but it does clarify Arab leaders' political thinking.

Mubarak didn't intend to incite Saddam to aggression against Kuwait, but, with hindsight, that is exactly what he did.

In the same way, Mubarak has no intention of inciting Arafat and Assad to break off negotiations with Israel, but that is what he is liable to achieve if Egyptian mediation replaces direct negotiation.

When oblique, dark hints take the place of clear discussion, they create complications.

Mubarak may be of the impression that Israel is prepared to pay a billion shekels to the Palestinian Authority as compensation for loss of income by Gazans working in Israel, but Israel lacks the financial resources to fund such a fantasy.

Mubarak may also believe that Israel is prepared for a deal along the lines of the cease-fire agreement after Operation Accountability in southern Lebanon, which will set boundary lines for terrorist activity; but the prime minister has already stated clearly that Israel sees terrorism as a strategic threat which must be halted.

Arafat may feel that the summit machinery set up this week in Cairo created a “support group” that will pressure Israel to accept his terms. He may also see it as having allowed Israeli leaders to circumvent promises to their public that negotiations would not proceed if Palestinian terror remained uncurbed.

The crisis in implementing the Oslo accord is a direct result of Arafat's shilly-shallying in combating anti-Israeli terror. It has nothing to do with a lack of Palestinian excuses for that terror.

To solve the crisis, it is firm action that is needed, not vague declarations.

The writer, a veteran journalist, comments on public affairs.

The crisis that never happened

ALLAN E. SHAPIRO

PRESIDENT Weizman's call for a reappraisal of relations with the Palestinians after the Beit Lid tragedy challenged textbook notions of the limits of presidential power. It seemed to have all the elements of a constitutional crisis. But the crisis never came.

Why not? The presidency is not immune to crisis. A mini-crisis—even demands that Weizman resign—followed reports this week of indiscreet presidential remarks about Science, Communications and Arts Minister Shulamit Aloni.

But the reverberations from a presidential initiative on the most critical issue in the nation's political life remained in the area of policy. They did not reach constitutional proportions. Few seriously suggested that the president, in advocating a second look at Oslo and its aftermath, was guilty of conduct unbecoming the nature of his office.

Clearly, Weizman has a lot going for him.

The government's weakness makes a confrontation with a popular president unlikely. Moreover, Weizman's proposals had a positive spinoff from the point of view of the Labor Party leadership. Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres are well aware of Weizman's prestige among key Arab leaders. No one else could so effectively deliver the message to Hosni Mubarak and Yasser Arafat that matters cannot continue this way.

Weizman has played this role before, presumably with full governmental support. At the beginning of his state visit to Turkey a year ago, he declared at a state dinner that Syrian President Assad had “failed to understand the expectations of the Israeli public,” and called on him “to make

a bold decision and meet Israelis, to get to know our prime minister and foreign minister.”

Weizman wasn't just delivering a message. He sees it as both his personal mission and as the basic presidential role to define and express the expectations of the Israeli public. It is certainly both the right and the duty of the president to express the national consensus.

In calling for a reappraisal of the peace process, the president placed more than his prestige on the line

Because of the prestige of the office of president, his definition of the national consensus can have a great deal to do with creating it. Whether or not Weizman was expressing a national consensus, he clearly expressed the public mood.

The main thrust of Weizman's initiative was a call for a second look. There is a rough parallel in the well-recognized authority of the judiciary to suggest the reexamination of existing legislation to the Knesset.

Only this week, the High Court, in its decision in the case of former deputy minister Rafael Pinhasi, recommended to the Knesset that it take a second look at the scope of parliamentary immunity.

WEIZMAN acted in the tradition of his two predecessors. Chaim Herzog, faced with the threatened collapse of the health system, publicly demanded the appointment of a judicial com-

mission of inquiry. The result was the committee headed by Justice Shoshana Netanyahu, whose recommendations formed the basis for the national health insurance plan that went into effect on January 1.

A second call by Herzog, for the appointment of a judicial commission to propose reforms in the election system, went unanswered. However, the presi-

dent's initiative lent support to the growing public pressure that eventually led to the enactment of the law for direct election of the prime minister.

In many respects, the most controversial presidential excursion into the political thicket was Yitzhak Navon's call for an independent inquiry into the 1982 Sabra and Shatila massacre.

In a dramatic, direct appeal to the nation, Navon demanded an investigation, primarily on moral grounds. He carefully did not commit himself to recommending a judicial commission of inquiry, or any other specific form of investigation, leaving this choice to the government.

The conduct of the war in Lebanon, health care, political reform—all of these were, at the time, hot political issues. None was at all related to a specific statutory power granted the president, such as the duty to “act toward the establishment of the government.”

In each case, the president urged a serious examination. He did not recommend that a particular policy emerge from the investigation he was proposing. However, in each case, the very fact of presidential intervention had significant political consequences.

Suppose presidential advice goes unheeded?

After he left office, Yitzhak Navon revealed that if his appeal for an independent inquiry into the massacre had gone unanswered, he would have resigned. In part, this reflected his view of the matter as a moral issue.

However, there is also a political aspect to presidential intervention.

The president's political assets largely center on the prestige of the office and on his ability to appeal to the nation as a whole. Once the president has put these assets on the line, there is no turning back.

A president who has been rebuffed in a major test is left without political assets, and resignation would be the only rational option.

The presidency, like other institutions of government, is not immune to change. After Navon and Herzog, it is no longer the figurehead office held by Ezer Weizman's uncle Chaim, Israel's first president. Presidential powers expand to achieve policy objectives within the national consensus.

There has been no constitutional crisis over the Weizman initiative, because it is firmly grounded in previous expansions of presidential power, which the national consensus has accepted and confirmed.

The writer is a legal and political commentator.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

B'NAI B'RITH

Sir,—Tommy Baer's ad directed to Dr. Yossi Beilin (January 20) was ill-advised and does not reflect the views of the rank-and-file B'nai B'rith members. I would suggest that Advocate Avigdor Warsha's advertisement of January 13 is a more true reflection.

As a past president of Columbia County Lodge (Penna.) B'nai B'rith who has made aliya, I would suggest that Mr. Baer join us here in Israel to get a better perspective. (Join Dr. William Wexler.)

If any clarification was needed, it could have pointed out that Mr. Warsha's title as vice-president, B'nai B'rith International, was for purposes of identification.

ARNOLD SULLUM

Sir,—Greer Fay Cashman's Grapevine of January 27 commenced on the two advertisements which appeared in your paper, which were addressed to Dr. Yossi Beilin, both with signatures of high officials of B'nai B'rith International.

May we point out that B'nai B'rith, as a Jewish fraternal organi-

zation which is all-embracing, does not take political or religious positions in public. Within its circle, it is possible for brethren of opposing political or religious views to sit and talk together on the things which unite us, and even discuss the things which divide us—hopefully, calmly, with respect and understanding. It is this which attracted us to B'nai B'rith over 50 years ago, as teenagers.

Bro. Avigdor Warsha should have known better. Thank you, Bro. Baer.

RUTH AND LEO DIREKTOR

Netanya.

TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS

Sir,—Before the Ministry of Transport issues driving licenses, it would be a good idea to make sure that new drivers visit the traffic accident wards in their own area hospitals. Discussions with the injured would help new drivers understand the danger to themselves and to others of driving carelessly.

These visits should take place just before the license is issued.

Jerusalem. MRS. C. BAFFSKY

KNESSET BEHAVIOR

Sir,—My husband and I regularly watch Knesset debates on Channel 33 and have witnessed a variety of not-so-honorable incidents, not least the shameful sight of sparsely attended sessions. However, we have rarely been so ashamed and appalled as we were at the sight of the vicious, unjustified attacks on acting chairman Esther Salmovitz, by hysterical, unprincipled members of the

coalition during the Jerusalem debate. Watching, aghast, their menacing gesticulations, bearing their shirts (threats of violence, sexist insults, etc.), one wondered, once again, what sort of people these are who stand at the helm of our battered nation. As Mrs. Salmovitz herself declared: “Shame on you!”

TRUDY GEFEN

Kiryat Ono.

NEEDED: A MASS RAILWAY SYSTEM

Sir,—I agree with much of what Beatrice Safra wrote in her January 13 letter about traffic deaths. However, she, like most writers on the subject, misses the point. Modern technology has put stronger and faster vehicles on the road that seem to almost drive themselves.

The modern world has also produced people who get “kicks” out of abusing themselves with too much caffeine, alcohol, drugs, etc. The modern person suffers from tensions, is overstimulated, depressed, angry.

The human element in most of the road accidents won't go away. Drivers will find ways of flogging the police.

The only real answer to death on the roads is a new government policy of developing a mass rail system as exists in Europe. This will include the re-education of our citizens to accept comfortable travel by fast trains during which time they can relax.

If the Egged monopoly was given the task of developing a mass rail network, we'd have it soon enough. As things stand, Egged with 15,000 workers present a powerful lobby against a much safer, potentially faster, pollution- and energy-saving transport system. Do we really want to see our beautiful countryside destroyed by superhighways and their connecting roads to accommodate the present and future vehicles?

MICKEY LOEB

Omer.

Too-eager Israelis, cool Arabs: a tale of unrequited love

AHARON MEGGED

THE hot, dry Arava wind had not yet dried the ink on the Israel-Jordan peace treaty and Israelis were already streaming to the bridges by the thousands. They went charging in a mighty torrent into all the reaches of the Hashemite kingdom, threatening to swamp it.

People who had never laid eyes on Avdat, Shivta and Beit She'an — not to mention Sebastia (capital of the biblical Kingdom of Israel) — couldn't wait to see the Roman columns at Jerash.

What was your rush, you impulsive Jews? Why are you in such a hurry? Wait a bit! Let them get used to the idea. Learn from them. See how cool they are, how restrained. They aren't rushing to you, to behold the wonders of the pubs and massage parlors of the "city that never stops."

It happened 15 years ago, after the warm peace with Egypt was signed. How energetically, how eagerly, those tens of thousands of Israelis streamed to Cairo, to Alexandria, swarmed to the marketplaces, shops, and restaurants! The Hebrew language bubbled and bargained away and filled the air with shouts to the point where every stall-operator and every shopkeeper learned the 100 basic words within a fortnight, and the hoteliers learned to feign courteous smiles to cover their disgust at Israeli raucousness and rudeness.

What was the meaning of this one-way stampede to a country that for over 30 years was the spearhead of the Arab wars against us, the vanguard of the venomous anti-Israel propaganda that has taken a toll of thousands among our people? What was the point of that great embrace? How many Egyptians have come to Israel during all these years of peace, during all this time that our mouths have dribbled hope and trust and love?

And those glorious days — does anyone remember them still? — immediately following the Six Day War. The era of the great euphoria of the Israeli people to the markets of Bethlehem, Ramallah, Hebron, eastern Jerusalem to buy embroidered dresses, rugs, scarves, beads and vegetables.

And the stupid delusion that just because we love them — or at least their wives — I mean those we defeated in a lightning war and whom we are now ruling — it follows that they love us.

BUT WHY speak of the vulgar masses, whose baser traits prevent them from thinking straight? Let us speak of the smart ones, the illuminati, those of the balanced, sober views.

How many delegations have gone out in the past 25 years — all of them initiated exclusively by us — delegations of writers, artists, professors, politicians — all of them devout lovers of peace and of the brotherhood of all people and nations — delegations to the Palestinians and to the Arabs of the neighboring countries, to tell them: We are your brothers, we have sinned against you, forgive us, at least us, we who feel for you, we who are different from the others, who are nothing like those occupiers. Here — here's our outstretched hand, take it, we're ready to help you any time, for, like you, we also hate injustice and oppression.

Now how many such Palestinian delegations of illuminati, and those from our neighboring countries have taken the initiative to come to us? No, not, God forbid, to tell us, "We too have sinned, just a little, against you" — such an eventuality is unimaginable! — but simply to say an encouraging word to the peacekeepers in our midst, and to express some readiness to cooperate with them in the holy cause of establishing peace.

To know how those Arab intel-



Where is the self-respect of Israelis who swarm to Jordan and Egypt, of those who rush to Gaza to kiss Arafat's stubbled cheek? Are Palestinians coming to Tel Aviv and Haifa to whisper sweet nothings in their ear?

ed, the politicians. Great days! The greatest since Israel's creation! Just for us, of course. Put your ear to the door! Listen carefully! Do you hear any friendly sounds coming through? Any whisperings of love?

In typical Israeli fashion, everything is done with great vim! With tremendous energy! With "vision"! A peace offensive! Simply overwhelming! Our neighbors haven't yet adjusted to the idea that they're talking to us, that they're opening their borders to us — and here we come with the "New Middle East," with grandiose plans for developing their science, their education, their natural resources, everything.

The foreign minister expressed his hope that we will be admitted into the Arab League! Who wants you there? Where's your hurry? Take it easy! Don't you realize that you're overwhelming them with your overbearingness to take them under your wing?

But the most disgraceful scene of all was staged on the barren, rock-strewn hills — uncultured since the days of the biblical Judges — between Efrat and El Khader, when dozens, perhaps hundreds, of Peace Now people and other leftists came to join the Palestinians in their struggle to redeem their lands from the Jewish settlers who had stolen them.

Did you consider carefully just who it was you were collaborat-

ing with in that struggle for justice, peace, and fraternity?

You want to bring an end to our domination over another people — for that people's sake and ours — because it is entitled to national rights just as we are. All well and good. I am with you in this. I have long been. I wrote on the subject two weeks after the Six Day War, and I haven't changed my mind.

So fight for it here at home, among your own people! With every democratic means! And as advocates of humanism, consider how to attain this objective by humane means — not only vis-à-vis the Arabs, but also vis-à-vis the Jews — that is, so it doesn't entail such non-humane measures as uprooting and demolishing Jewish settlements, forcible expulsion of Jews, transfer, for which there is no peacetime precedent in any country. If you do so, the majority of the Israeli na-

tion will be on your side and you will attain your objective.

But your burning hatred of the settlers — which is fiercer than your hatred of the terrorists — has caused you to lose your perspective to the point where you go to fight them side by side with those whom even you call "enemy!"

Why this hatred? You know very well that they did not cause the intifada, and they are not the cause of the fierce hostility directed against us, but the occupation itself, for which they are not responsible. You also know very well that the vast majority of the settlements came into being with the approval and support of the various governments of both the left and the right. So why are you pinning all the guilt on them?

Why were you in such a dither about your demand that they be evacuated, uprooted, even before it occurred to Arafat to de-

Palestinians as a disaster, while I consider it a window of hope — but perhaps meeting them will help you to stop seeing them as demons and start seeing them as human beings.

And comrades, consider one more thing. Consider the fact that in the hedonistic and materialistic society in which we're living, whose daily cultural fare is the gossipy chatter and the tales of crime and sex carried by the steadily yellowing press; whose youth, devoid of ideals, is fleeing to drugs or to money or overseas — consider that in this society there are people who are a bit different; and notwithstanding their political views, it is worthwhile meeting them and taking up the challenge they pose.

They are busy studying Torah and observing mitzvot and learning Talmud, but they are far from being haredi-style fundamentalists, and they are open to all branches of science, to poetry, prose, academic debates. They know the ways of the world. They also allow room for doubt. Above all, they cope with matters intellectual and spiritual, and with the burning problems of existence, which isn't too common in our end-of-century secular society. They aren't all darkness, then; there is also some light there, no?

When the Palestinians — not necessarily the extreme fundamentalist Hamas, but Arafat's Fatah — burn the Israeli flag in the town squares, isn't it your flag they are burning? When they shout in chorus, "With our soul and blood we will redeem Palestine from the Jordan to the Sea," and "We will return to Jaffa and Haifa," and "Al-Kuds is our capital" — aren't they shouting that against you, too?

And when the murderers among them ax open the head of a girl in Jerusalem or Bat Yam, do they first check whether she's a member of Tsomet, or of Gush Emunim or Meretz? Do you really believe they respect you more for demonstrating with them against the Jews on Judea's bald hillocks? More than they respect the people of Efrat, who have lived in peace with them all these years? And you — you incited the people of El-Khader against them. As Rabbi Shlomo Riskin, an honest, moderate man, who supports autonomy and rights for the Palestinians, said in an interview: "Most of the Palestinians are more down to earth than the Israeli leftists. They are willing to try to understand us. But it's hard for them to be more moderate than the Israelis" (*Ha'aretz*, January 15).

Those Arabs with whom you are colluding will not respect you more, and won't have mercy on you when trouble comes. They will only scorn you, as they do all "collaborators."

Why do you rush to them? Why do you incite them to fight for the return of supposedly stolen lands? Why do you go on inciting them to the point where their movement will spread like wildfire in a field of thorns and flare into a second intifada, one that will be much more difficult than the first one?

For the weapon of the first was rocks, whereas this time, the weapons will be rifles and machine guns and hatchets and spades. Do you intend to plunge a knife into your own heart?

The writer is a leading author. Translated by Moshe Kohn.

National Insurance Institute

ADDENDUM TO THE SOCIAL SECURITY AGREEMENT BETWEEN ISRAEL AND GERMANY

Monthly restitution payments (renta) for former residents of Eastern Europe.

According to this addendum, which will be signed in the near future, former residents of Eastern Europe, whose culture and language was German, and who were forced to flee from their homeland as a result of the spread of National Socialism, will be entitled to receive monthly restitution payments (renta). After the signing of the agreement, the National Insurance Institute will publish the conditions for receiving the payments, and the timetable and instructions for submitting applications.

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Paris's Bastille neighborhood celebrates revival

Eateries, galleries and a new opera house have breathed life into the historic area, Christopher Reynolds writes

THE rich get richer. And Paris, which didn't particularly need another lively neighborhood, has one.

Despite the gloom of recession throughout Europe, the last few years have brought new eateries, operatic strains, modern architecture, daring galleries and youthful energy to the formerly "workaday and blue-collar Parisian neighborhood surrounding the old Bastille prison site."

The Bastille building itself, long associated with the revolution of 1789, is long gone. But the July Column, the 55-meter-high monolith commemorating lives lost as 19th-century Parisians struggled against later oppressors, is surrounded each night by alfresco diners, strolling musicians, preening motorcyclists and general hubbub.

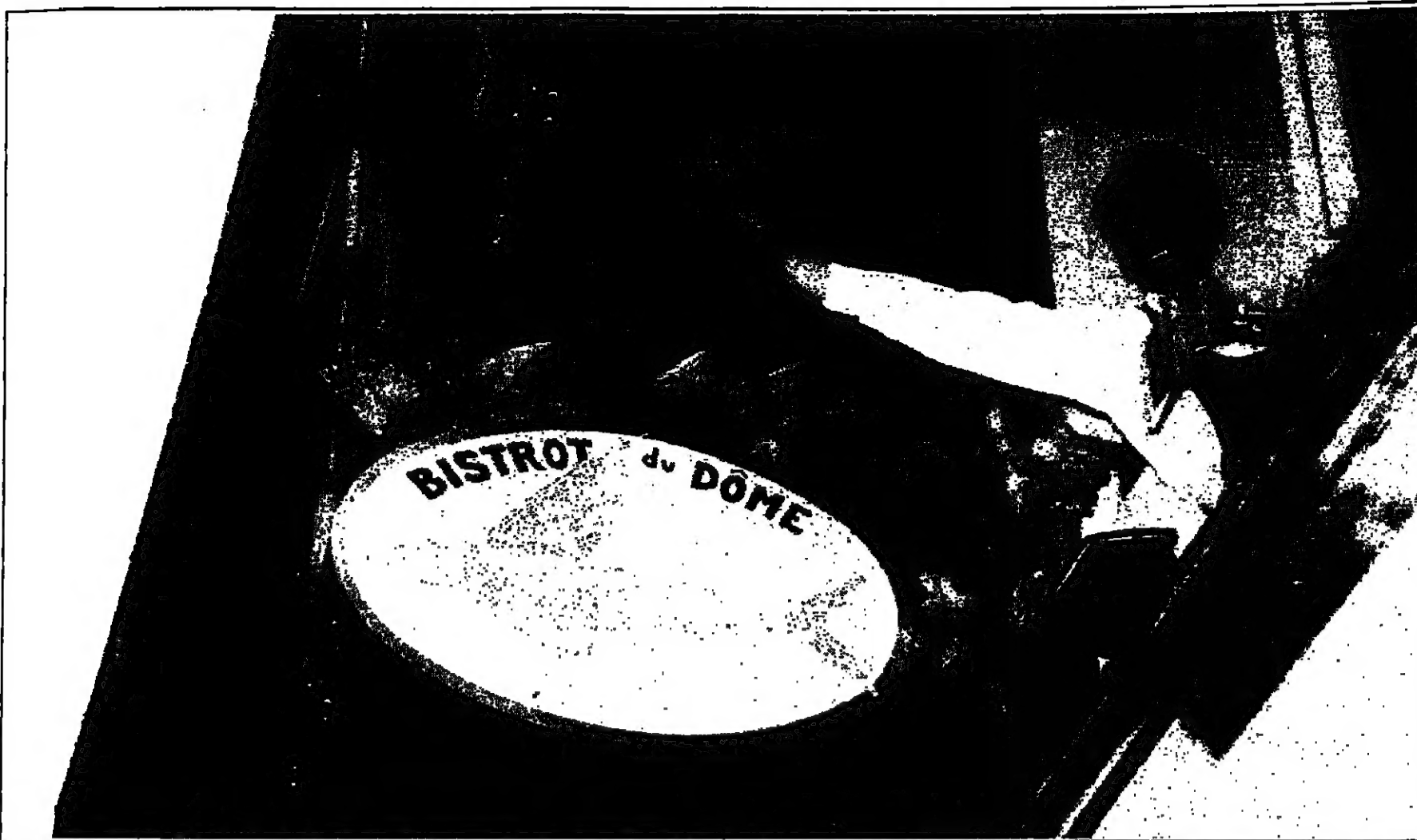
Arnaud Dupont, a 28-year-old Parisian I found dining in the elegant Bistrot du Dome — then in its fourth month of operation just a block from the July Column — explained it all this way: "When [the district of] Montmartre got very boring because it got taken over by second-generation, nontrendy adults, people came here."

All this energy caught me off guard when I straggled into the neighborhood last summer.

The Place de la Bastille lies at the east end of the city, on the Right Bank of the Seine River, and acts as a hub from which the city's 4th, 11th and 12th "arrondissements" radiate. Its neighbors include the Marais district, an area once regal, later neglected and resurgent again, with government backing, over the last 30 years.

Still, until recently the Bastille area was best known as a neighborhood of furniture-finishing shops and wholesale wine warehouses.

I had come to the Bastille area because the hotels were cheaper than in the fancier neighborhoods near the city center, and because a Metro stop was handy. But as soon as I could be rid of my bags, I found my way to a sidewalk-view seat beneath the July Column, hoisted a Judas — that's a Belgian brand of beer — and set to people-watching.



The elegant Bistrot du Dome is one of the restaurants giving new life to the formerly blue-collar neighborhood of the historic prison. (Christopher Reynolds)

It was about 10:30 p.m. A jazz band by the curb was grooving along on "Straight No Chaser," and the sun had just dipped beneath the skyline.

Down the narrow neighboring streets, the trendy restaurants and bars were bustling in all their glory — the Bofinger brasserie and bistro on Rue de la Bastille, for instance, and the Blue Elephant on Rue de la Roquette. Chez Paul on Rue de Charenton, the China Club on Rue de Charenton, and on and on.

The next night, I found my way to Rue de Lappe, which has been the liveliest street in the neighborhood for decades. Edith Piaf is said to have sung here 60 years ago in the Balajo dance hall, whose sign still casts a red neon glow on passersby.

On weekend nights, the press of students and young revelers makes automobile passage down the narrow lane almost impossible.

On the night of my tour, in the Crepes Show restaurant, at 51 Rue de Lappe, half a dozen fish circled in a globe-

shaped fishbowl, a mannequin stood draped in black by the door, and two dozen candle-lit, late-night diners conspired over lemon, chocolate and banana crepes.

At Tapas Nocturne, at 17 Rue de Lappe, bullfight paintings hung on a stone wall, and a pair of guitarists flailed furiously, sounding about as Spanish as a practitioner of flamenco can sound.

Instead, they turned out to be representatives of the new Europe without borders — the new world without borders, in fact: one was Japanese; the other, Argentine. Still, they had the attitude, and so did their listeners.

Up and down the block there was Thai food, fish and chips, an ersatz American diner, the Iguana Cafe, Rio Grande, the Del Rio Cafe and half a dozen bistros.

"The neighborhood was very old before," said Rudolphe Leroux, a neighborhood resident for most of his 23 years.

"In the buildings, a lot of laborers and furniture businesses. Now, as Paris be-

comes more expensive, they rebuild the hotels and the restaurants, he said."

In the Chinese and Japanese restaurants on nearby Rue de la Roquette just a few years ago, Leroux recalled, "it was FR 100, and you could eat everything you wanted. Now, it's 200."

As Leroux spoke, he stood in the modest lobby of the Libertel Bastille, yet another sign of the Bastille's resurgence. An aged hotel property, the site was sold, renovated and then reopened in March 1993, as a crowded but clean lodging with prices that young travelers can afford — well under \$100 nightly.

As such developments progress, some worry that the loft-dwellers who helped spark the neighborhood's new energy will all be driven out. But that's not going to slow anything down.

But the biggest opening in the neighborhood's last decade, hands down, has been the hulking opera house that stands near the footprint of the old prison.

The Opera de la Bastille is undeniably striking and modern. From anywhere

around the Place de la Bastille, you can't look up without confronting a broad, curving face of glass and metal rectangles.

Inside is a stark 2,700-seat main auditorium, covertly served by all manner of stage hydraulics and modern theatrical technology.

Early on in the project, there was much talk about making this an opera house for the masses.

As it worked out, it's an opera house for those among the masses who care to pay \$24-\$104 for a reserved seat (though those who appear at the door have a chance at gallery seats for about \$11).

At least some of the non-paying masses, however, have found a use for the opera house: Waiting for friends or merely loitering, young Parisians gather nightly to sit, slouch, gossip, admire each others' scooters, and laconically smoke on its stone front steps.

An excellent Parisian solution: While the rich get richer, the idle get idler. (Los Angeles Times)

No need to sleep behind bars

TO sample the flavor of the old-new Bastille quarter, try one of these hotels or eateries.

Where to stay:

Le Pavillon Bastille (65 Rue de Lyon, Paris 75012; telephone 00-33-1-43-43-65-65, fax 00-33-1-43-43-96-52) gleams in blue and yellow postmodernism. Twenty-five rooms, with elevator and air conditioning. Double rooms rent for about \$162 nightly.

Libertel Bastille (14 Rue de la Roquette, 75011; tel. 00-33-1-47-00-56-02, fax 00-33-1-47-00-39-33) is modest and elevator-less, but clean, and staffed by helpful, multilingual young people.

Thirty rooms. No air-conditioning. Double rooms rent for \$82-\$95 nightly.

Hotel Les Sans-Culottes (27 Rue de Lappe, 75011; tel. 00-33-1-49-23-85-80, fax 00-33-1-48-05-08-56).

For the young and footloose who don't mind a little tumult in the street below. Guest rooms are stacked over an Art Nouveau bar and restaurant.

Not much English spoken. Renovated in 1992, which brought new plumbing, but no elevator and no air-conditioning. Showers, no tubs. Ten rooms.

Double rooms nightly: about \$64.

Where to eat:

Crepes Show (51 Rue de Lappe, Paris 75011; local tel. 47-00-36-46) is a good, unpretentious stop for dessert.

Tapas Nocturne (17 Rue de Lappe, Paris 75011; tel. 43-57-91-12), is more for drinking and listening to flamenco than for eating.

Le Bistrot de Bofinger (6 Rue de la Bastille, Paris 75004; tel. 42-72-05-23). Mosaic tiled floor, murals, brass and mirrors, and a slice of avocado is the salad. Dinner main courses: \$12-\$15.

Bistrot du Dome (2 Rue de la Bastille, Paris 75004; tel. 48-04-88-44). Dinner main courses: \$15-\$24.

C.R.

The beauty spot that leaves its mark on you

IMPROVE your looks and take years off your complexion with a beauty secret that you can't buy in your neighborhood pharmacy and definitely can't take home.

For hundreds of years, women have washed in Ein Izvel (Jezebel's Spring), between Afula and Beit She'an, and probably not for religious reasons, given its association with the wicked queen after

whom it's named.

Jezebel instigated her husband, the Israelite King Ahab, to bring false charges against the farmer Naboth and execute him after Naboth refused to sell his vineyard to the king. Eventually, Jezebel had the dubious honor of being the first recorded victim of defecation and her body was eaten by dogs.

It is understandable that a site

SEE IT HERE

HAIM SHAPIRO

associated with such a figure does not attract women who want to bear children or even find a good mate, as do other sites in this country. The women who come to Jezebel's Spring do so for one reason only: they believe its wa-

ters will make them better able to entice men.

"The water makes my skin smooth and beautiful and removes wrinkles," a Beduin woman once told Eyal Yaffe, director of the Valleys Tourist Board. The board serves the Beit She'an and Jezreel valley, Gilboa, Megiddo and Tavor regional councils.

According to Yaffe, Moslem, Jewish and Christian women come to the spring, which is located, appropriately, near the Navot Junction, at the foot of Tel Yizre'el, at the top of which are the ruins of Ahab's fortress.

Following an ancient road, Yaffe took me about one-third of the way up the tell, to a point where the ground leveled off.

"This is where Naboth's vineyard was," said Yaffe, confidently locating the site of an event that occurred 2,500 years ago. He explained that archaeologists uncovering Ahab's fortress had established that vineyards had grown on the level area in antiquity.

The spring comes to the surface in a small pool, just large enough for a swim. The water is 20° year-round. Surrounding the pool is a grove of eucalyptus trees. However, the ground is so marshy that the National Parks Authority, which is responsible for the site, cuts down trees that

are in danger of toppling and removes fallen trees that block visitors' access to the spring.

While at the spring, we met with Tsafir Yitzhaki, one of the owners of Hey Hajep, a company which specializes in jeep tours. We had barely started out in his jeep when he pointed out another site associated with a nasty woman from the Bible.

"That's the old Ein Dor," Yitzhaki said, pointing out a stand of palm trees near the new settlement of the same name. He was referring, of course, to the spot at which King Saul visited the witch of Endor, to hear the dreadful prophecy of his end.

Our jeep trip was along Nahal Tavor, a wild stretch of country with an everflowing stream which becomes a raging torrent in winter. Wild flowers are in bloom all over the country at this time of year, and the banks of the Tavor are blanketed with them, especially cyclamen and anemones.

It is a drive which envelops the visitor in the wild. There are no roads, no electric or telephone lines, no modern buildings. Only the remains of ancient water mills peep out of the jungle-like undergrowth. The only other people we saw were schoolchildren.

We saw no wildlife except for a fine assortment of brightly colored birds.

Wheelchair ski tours

TRAVEL TIPS

HAIM SHAPIRO

THE Israel Disabled Ski Association is organizing ski tours to Fügen in the Austrian Tyrol for those confined to wheelchairs.

The skiers will use specially developed chairs on monoskis, with hand-held mini-skis for maneuvering. The all-inclusive week-long tour ranges from \$1,000 to \$1,500, depending on the degree of disability. For information, tel. 03-492424.

THE BARGAIN prices this week: A six-night package to London from \$389, organized by Dierenhaus Tours. In Antalya, a four-night package from \$189, with half board, from Yossi Tours. A week with half board at the Ganei Moriah Dead Sea for NIS 1,155, from Mitze Tours. Three nights with half board at the Meridien Hotel in Limassol for \$299 or three nights at the Laura Beach Hotel in Paphos with breakfast for \$239, from Arkia.

Arkia is also lowering the prices of its tours to Jordan. A three-night weekend bus tour is \$369, with half board, and the two-day tour to Petra, including

flights to and from Eilat and full board, is \$279.

FOR THE really rock-bottom getaway, Kibbutz Malkia in Upper Galilee is offering a February and March special of a three-night stay, including breakfast, for NIS 246 per couple.

The kibbutz is also offering a special horse-riding vacation for families from March 6 through 12. The daily price (not including riding) for a couple and one child is NIS 145 including breakfast and NIS 214 with full board. For a couple with two children, the prices are NIS 175 and NIS 263. Riding lessons twice a day are available for NIS 80 per person.

AIR FRANCE has a round-trip ticket to Paris for \$333. The offer, valid until March 18, is only for the company's Saturday flights, with return on any flight.

ARKIA AND the Sonesta Hotel in Eilat are offering flights to and from Ben-Gurion, and a two-night mid-week stay with half board for NIS 679. The package on weekends, with breakfast only and one Shabbat lunch, is NIS 739.

The company is also offering a round-trip air ticket from Ben-Gurion Airport to Eilat for NIS 99 to those staying at the Eilat Moriah Plaza Hotel for a three-night weekend.

GUESTS AT the Geshet Haziv Guest House will now be able to participate in special jeep tours of Galilee villages, where they can see artisans at work. Among the traditional crafts are wood carving, stone carving, and copper engraving.

LUFTHANSA's first-class passengers will now be able to enjoy Yarden wine. Following a special tasting by the company's chief steward, the airline is including the prize-winning Yarden Cabernet Sauvignon '90 in its "Vinotheque," which offers fine wines from around the world.

NATOUR HAS published its Africa brochure for the year. Among the new packages offered is a 15-night tour to the island of Madagascar, including three days on the adjoining small island of Nosy Be. The price of the package, including airfare, is \$4,340.

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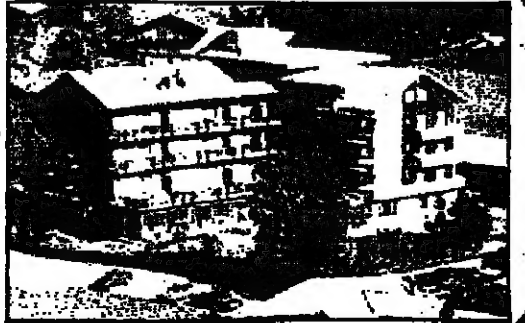
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NEWS IN FOCUS

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 1995

Time is of the essence, but Rabin has little

He's hoping the Cairo summit can help his image, but Rabin needs more to get out of his policy-making rut, writes David Makovsky

WHATEVER the substantive outcome of yesterday's unprecedented four-party Cairo summit, the timing was just right for the battered Rabin government.

The summit had the elements that Prime Minister Rabin's top aide Eitan Haber loves. He likes photo opportunities which allow Rabin to be shown as a statesman among other leaders, far from Labor Party wrangling.

The event was on a Thursday, so the pictures could be prominently displayed in the weekend newspapers. Haber hopes this will dispel public distress about terror attacks and about Rabin's flip-flops on the capital gains tax.

Officials in the Prime Minister's Office hinted this week that they had a surprise in store that would replace the bad news that has plagued Rabin, but it seems that Rabin will need more than a Cairo summit to refocus his leadership and regain credibility. This won't be easy for a prime minister so overburdened that he does not have time to concentrate on important issues. The result is the public often believes its leader does not have a strategy for dealing with big issues.

Rabin's reverses have made him sound indecisive: there was a capital gains tax, then there wasn't; there was a settlement freeze, then there wasn't; there were peace talks, then there weren't; and there was to be a security fence, then there wasn't.

One reason that anger sometimes substitutes for policy. After the Dizengoff Street bus bombing in October, Rabin said his goal was to separate Israelis and Palestinians. However, Rabin was sounding more like a critic than a leader. He did not instruct the army or his aides to devise an integrated plan to put his idea into practice.

It was not until the Beit Lid massacre three months later that Rabin revived the idea of separation, telling the cabinet this week that he wanted panels established to formulate the idea.

Fighting terrorism won't be easy, and there is no evidence it will end if the



Rabin took on an ambitious reform program, but he's been hampered by too many issues, insufficient staff and his own flip-flops. (Isaac Harari)

peace process does. But sources in the Prime Minister's Office are concerned that whatever they do on terrorism, they cannot eliminate the issue that - according to a poll conducted for the prime minister this week - was foremost in the public's mind after Beit Lid. Israel can take more safety precautions and press Yasser Arafat to crack down on terrorists. But, in the end, it is hard to deter a suicide bomber.

LACK OF forethought was also evident when it came to the capital gains tax.

Part from several flip-flops on this issue over the last seven months, Rabin and Finance Minister Avraham Shohat did not foresee that they would be out on a limb politically on this issue without even knowing for more than a month whether it would be feasible to collect the tax while allowing investors to offset their losses.

There is another reason for Rabin's problems. Apart from the security services that report to him, Rabin has only a few loyalists working with him, and they are always dealing with an avalanche of immediate problems. There is essentially no civilian staff that serves to help Rabin conceptualize or implement ideas. Without a "genuine" staff system, those answering to the premier are spokes around a main hub. Just like his predecessor, Yitzhak Shamir, a suspicious Rabin compartmentalizes his aides and ministers.

One result of this is that an enormous number of small issues get to the 72-year-old premier. "On an average day, Rabin has at least a dozen meetings, where at least 30 to 40 decisions are made," says a senior aide to the prime minister. "Every minister, so cognizant that he was elected on Rabin's coattails in 1992, wants to consult with him on relatively minor issues."

The secular Rabin sometimes seems like "Rebbe Rabin," with people always seeking personal audiences or passing him notes via aides. For example, while MK Moshe Gafni (United Torah Judaism) may criticize the government from the opposition benches in the Knesset, he sought a meeting with Rabin this week to discuss developing a "hardi" neighborhood in the Negev.

Part of the problem is created by all the ministerial hats that Rabin wears. He has held some of the positions in reserve for Shas, should it return to the coalition, and he insists he will part with them soon. But this hasn't happened yet.

Several months ago, the cabinet appointed a ministerial panel to discuss whether women may read Torah at the Western Wall. The panel consisted of the prime minister, the interior minister and the religious affairs minister. All three were Yitzhak Rabin. Finally, Po-

lice Minister Moshe Shahal was thrown in for good measure.

Apart from being prime minister, the biggest burden - but the one Rabin enjoys the most - is being defense minister. He believes that to guide the peace process the way he wants, he cannot relinquish that portfolio. He also loves the micro-details of planning military operations. The joke going around is that if forced to choose between being premier and defense minister, Rabin would choose the latter.

But in a recent poll, 86% of the public said he should give up the defense portfolio. That casts doubts on how strong his image is as "Mr. Security" - which has always been central to his public appeal.

Sometimes, Rabin misses a big issue because he does not have time to deal with everything. For example, one big issue is the proposed free trade agreement with the European Union. It is

the first time in 20 years that Europe, Israel's largest trading partner, has allowed Israel to renegotiate and upgrade their trade agreement.

The deal the EU wants to sign now, according to ministers involved, is a bad one. It does not put a dent in Israel's ballooning \$7.4 billion deficit with the EU, which is 2 1/2 times the amount of all US aid to Israel.

Rabin - who is known not to like the proposed accord - has had no time to deal with the issue, let alone be preoccupied by it. If Rabin were to deal with the matter personally, his status as a Nobel Peace Prize winner could help him extract trade concessions.

Rabin is also overburdened because he has taken on an ambitious reform agenda. "We are dealing with issues that have been swept under the rug for a long time," said one aide, ticking off education, infrastructure, health and, of course, the peace process.

MINISTERS ARE NOT happy with Rabin's well-known lone-wolf decision-making style. Ministers privately complain that Rabin is definitely part of the problem. One cabinet minister associated with Rabin said privately, "He does not consult us. Do you think we know what is going on?"

With Israeli politicians out of the loop and only a tiny staff close to Rabin, this vacuum has been filled by two elites respected by Rabin for their expertise: top military brass and very wealthy industrialists.

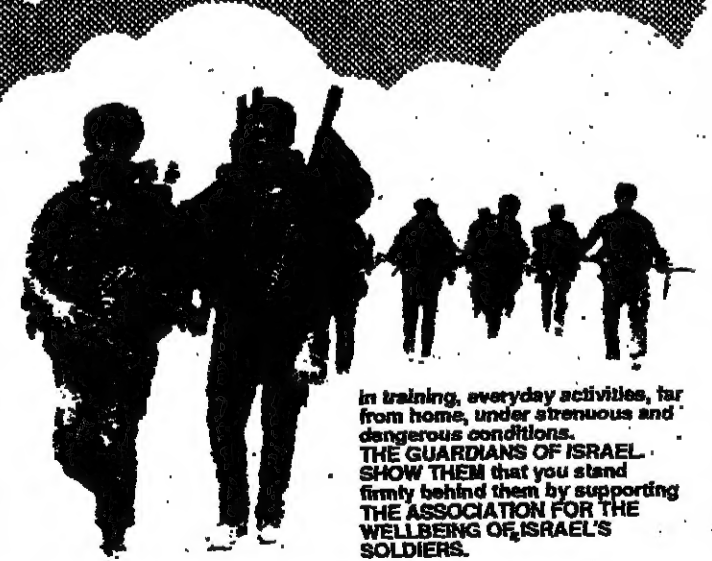
Unlike people in the military or business, Rabin's ministers do not enjoy his trust. The premier believes they are ordinary politicians with no expertise except in state-of-the-art leaks to the media. However, there still needs to be better coordination with them.

For example, during a trip to the US this week, Construction and Housing Minister Binyamin Ben-Eliezer spoke to policymakers and others at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy. In a written speech, Ben-Eliezer said emphatically that Israel would not return to the pre-1967 border with Syria. This was a departure from Rabin's policy of not predetermining the extent of Golan withdrawal.

Started policymakers wondered whether Rabin was using Ben-Eliezer to enunciate a new policy. When someone confronted him with this question, Ben-Eliezer quickly backtracked. "Everything is negotiable," he declared.

This left people scratching their heads and dismissing Ben-Eliezer as representing nobody but himself. A jaded observer left the session saying, "There is no Israel. There is only a confederation of duchies." Another retorted, "A loose confederation of duchies."

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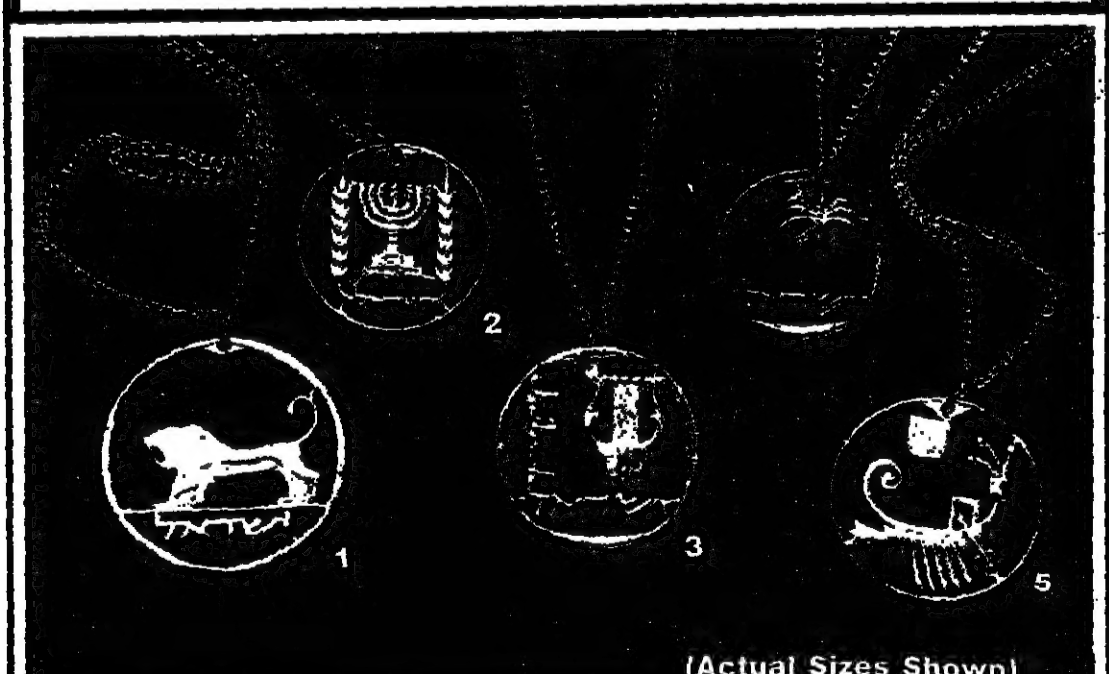
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Ramadan moon boosts PA's mufti

An opportunity to preempt Amman in preparing the start of the fast as a major political coup, Hillel Kuttler writes

— Akram Sabri managed to pull off a major political coup for the Palestinian Authority this week, and sent the Israeli authorities scrambling to cope with the PA's newfound power in Jerusalem.

After being elected PLO Chairman by Yasser Arafat last year to be the new Jerusalem mufti, Sabri was elected by the Ramadan new mufti, a different opinion from the religious leaders in Amman, who actually appeared. This difference allowed Sabri to break with tradition and declare the start of Ramadan a day before Amman.

The spokesman working in Jerusalem for Jibril Rajoub, the PLO security chief in Jericho, also helped — reportedly by convincing Sabri's opponents in the PLO's religious establishment and warning the Moslem muftis to stay from them.

These sources said Sabri decided to go to declare the start of Ramadan according to the sighting of the new moon by the Muslims in Saudi Arabia, rather than in Jordan.

Statements on this issue from Amman and Mecca are expected. Sabri's move can make a difference in the new moon sighting, and delay the beginning of the fast for as many as 10 days.

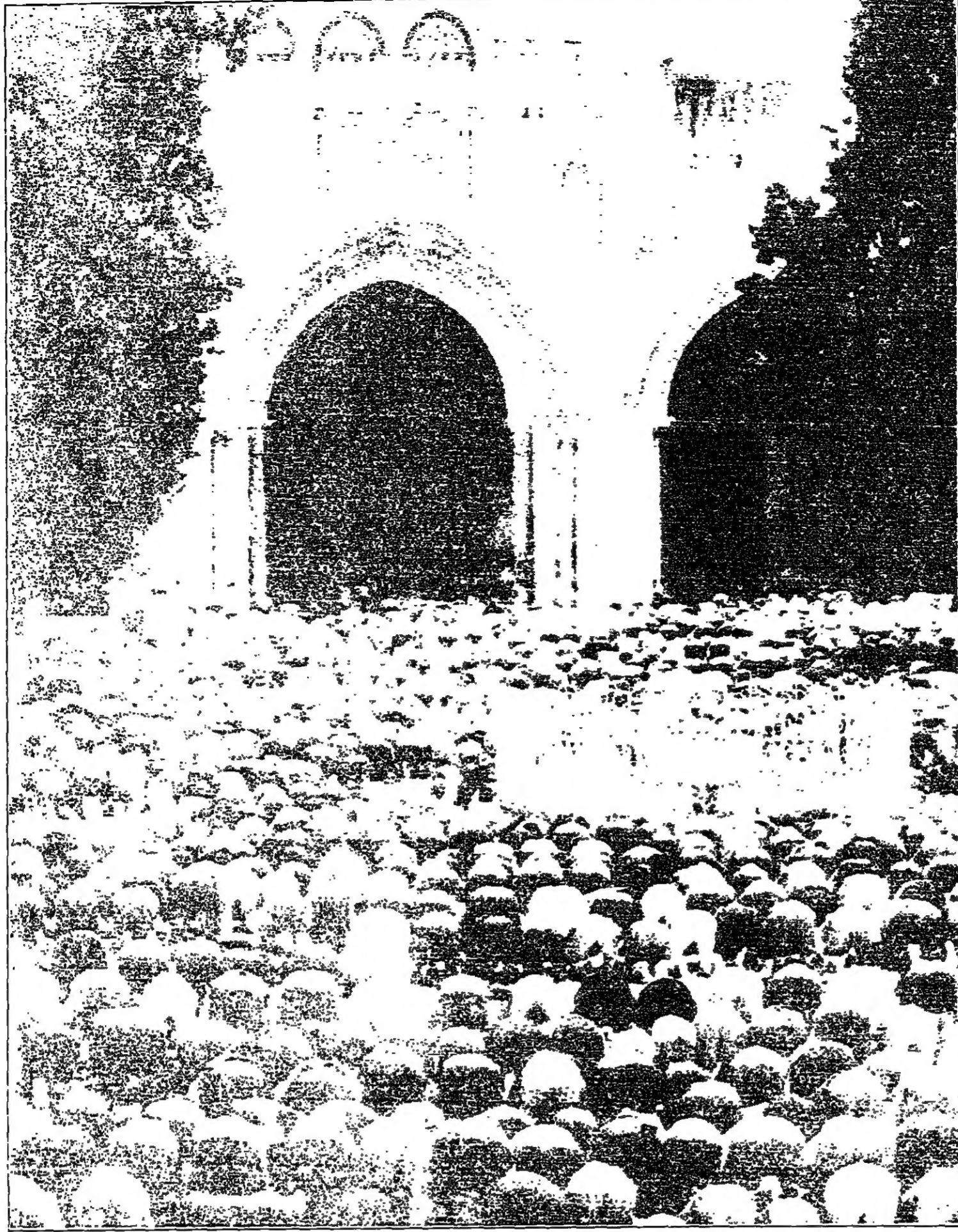
Who had been the mufti at al-Aksa Mosque, the PLO's major Moslem shrine, in Amman, the move would be the first to demonstrate Palestinian authority at al-Aksa in light of the Jordanian claims to it, the sources said.

Sabri's plans would have come to light, however, had Jordan's King Abdullah declared the start of the holiday on the same day.

On Monday night, the moon was in Sabri's favor. In Amman, it was not spotted, and the month of daylight, fasting and night-time feasting would not begin until Wednesday.

In Mecca, however, they decided the moon dictated that the holiday should begin the next day, Tuesday.

Sabri gathered Palestinian religious leaders in his office just outside the Temple Mount, and at about 7 p.m. Monday declared: "The fast of Ramadan



Ramadan prayers at Jerusalem's Al-Aksa mosque; this year, Jerusalemites beat Amman's Moslems to the fast. (R. Nowitz, Media)

will begin tomorrow."

"We no longer take our orders from the Jordanians," Sabri said in an interview afterwards.

Arafat was even more dramatic about the significance of the break with Jordan.

"For the first time in the history of the Palestinian nation, we announce... to the Arab and Islamic world the witnessing of the new Ramadan moon from the Aksa Mosque under the Palestinian Authority," Arafat was quoted as saying in the eastern Jerusalem daily *Al-Quds*.

Indeed, if it was uncertain before, the Ramadan decision established that the PA has made significant inroads in increasing its influence on the Moslem religious establishment in Jerusalem.

The Jordanian-appointed mufti has long been forgotten. A random sampling of Palestinians in eastern Jerusalem, asked to name the Jerusalem mufti, did not hesitate to answer Akram Sabri.

No one mentioned Sheikh Abdul-Qader Abdeen, the Jordanian appointee.

ABDEEN AND Sabri were appointed days apart by Palestinians and Jordanians, just after the signing of the Jordanian-Israeli Declaration of Principles, as each side sought to exert its power in Jerusalem.

But what began as rivalry quickly became a no-contest match. Abdeen sits alone in his office by Al-Aksa, ignored by the Palestinian Moslem public. No one comes to him for a decision on religious matters.

The 66-year-old Abdeen was not even invited to the ceremonial announcement of the start of Ramadan. Instead, the entire affair was run out of Sabri's office.

A bodyguard with a PLO flagpin on his lapel kept close to Sabri at all times.

Yitzhak Reiter, an expert on the Wakf and director of the Institute for Israel Arab Affairs at Beit Berl, says that Sabri's rise to power should come as no surprise.

"No one expected the Palestinian public to support a Jordan-appointed mufti over an Arafat-appointed mufti," Reiter said.

"Jibril Rajoub's men also helped," according to Reiter. "Officials I have been in contact with for years at the Wakf told me that Rajoub's men terrified Palestinians away from the Abdeen."

One Israeli official explained that the post of mufti has long been seen as largely symbolic; of more concern are the Wakf officials who actually run al-Aksa and other Moslem holy sites and properties in Jerusalem. The Jordanian-appointed Wakf officials are still in office; but the PA wants to replace them. Palestinian sources say.

However, the official added, the authorities can no longer ignore the mufti, given the political base that Sabri is fast building.

"There has been no one like him as mufti since Haj Amin el-Husseini," the official said, referring to the powerful Mandate-period mufti who led the Arab fight against the Jews and the British and was later welcomed by Hitler in Germany, where he reviewed the Bosnian Moslem brigade of the SS.

Sabri, the official noted, often refers to himself not as the mufti of Jerusalem, but the mufti of Palestine, a position hitherto unknown.

Sabri himself explained: "I am the mufti of all Palestinian Moslems, in Gaza, the occupied West Bank and Israel."

Taking a break from receiving guests at his office, he continued: "We see Palestine as one unit. This is not a political question, but a religious one. That is what I want to make clear."

He was clearly in good spirits, and for good reason: Today, thousands of Moslem worshippers are expected to converge on al-Aksa for the first Friday prayers of Ramadan, and the first at which a PA mufti is in charge.

But the authorities have until now maintained a hands-off policy with regard to Sabri's emergence to power. Sabri's office is located near one of the Temple Mount gates; policemen are stationed at the gate 24 hours a day. But the policemen looked the other way when leading Moslem religious leaders from Gaza, Jenin, Hebron, Ramallah and elsewhere came to the office Monday night, even though several did not have permits to be in Jerusalem. Apparently, police were ordered not to disrupt the dealings of the PA mufti.

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Attaching strings to Egyptian aid

US aid to Egypt is still a sacred cow, but there are calls to impose conditions, Hillel Kuttler reports from Washington

WHEN Secretary of State Warren Christopher appeared before the House International Relations Committee eight days ago, Congressman Tom Lantos had a pointed message for him to deliver to Cairo.

"President [Hosni] Mubarak has enjoyed a great deal of support from this Congress," the Democrat from California began. "Egypt is the second-largest recipient of our foreign aid. This is predicated on Egypt's constructive approach to the peace process."

But in light of last month's Alexandria summit, as well as Egypt's recent cozying up to Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi, Lantos continued: "I'm asking you, Mr. Secretary, to convey in the strongest possible terms to the Egyptian government that the good will and financial support of the American Congress is directly related to the attitude Egypt takes both with respect to the peace process and with respect to terrorism."

Lantos's statement was a not-so-veiled warning that Egypt must mind its place. It also brought to the fore the question of how secure Cairo's \$2.1 billion annual aid package is on Capitol Hill.

Despite the budget-cutting wind that waited in with the new Republican-led Congress, Egypt's aid program remains sacred cows.

Still, some observers in Washington are convinced that Cairo must be on its toes this congressional session. And it's not because of recent Mediterranean friction over Egypt's insistence that it will not sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty unless Israel does, congressional sources say that issue has been registered with lawmakers.

Christopher lauded Mubarak's role in hosting the Cairo summit, which took place yesterday — this was a pat on the back for "the kind of productive role, a more constructive role" Egypt can play in regional affairs, said an Israeli official in the US.

Instead, there is the problem of appearances. Egypt has a staggering \$1.75 billion stuck in the "pipeline" — a term referring to congressional funds that have been approved and appropriated and that remain unspent. The backlog has accumulated over the last three to five years.

Consequently, congressional staffers said, the maxim, "If you don't use it, you lose it," could apply to Egypt's chagrin: pipeline money could be siphoned off instead for other foreign-aid programs or other parts of the budget. Even more alarming is the message that the situation sends about how vital the aid is in the first place.

In fact, last year Congress rescinded \$40 million that had already been deposited with the US Agency for International Development (AID) in Cairo for projects that remained uncontracted for, they said. On a visit this week, AID's Cairo director John Westley discussed with Senate Foreign Relations Committee staffers the problem of contract delays in Egypt that are known to postpone spending.

EGYPTIAN Ambassador Ahmed Maher el-Sayed said the pipeline "is a concern of ours," but results merely from "a bureaucratic problem" in the method of disbursement.

He asserted that Cairo wouldn't have that problem if it received its economic assistance

as Israel does, in the form of a check rather than in a package by-product.

But these familiar with American foreign aid say the demands in disbursement methods as a safeguard against the rampant corruption inherent in disbursement contracts in Egypt.

Besides the pipeline problem, Colorado Republican Senator Hank Brown, the first chairman of the Near East subcommittee, is seeking to hold up Egypt's more than \$1.2 billion annual military assistance until the economic aid package that now stands at \$876 million.

Last fall, Brown proposed shifting 20 percent of Egypt's defense assistance to economic aid, but the amendment died before it got out of the subcommittee. It is unclear whether he has attracted allies in the new Congress for the idea.

Brown said this week his plan is meant to encourage Egyptian economic reforms.

"Certainly, defense spending is important," Brown said, "but our primary focus should be to help them get their economy straightened out. To continue to have a major share of it go for defense, I think overlooks the most urgent needs in Egypt. My hope is we can provide help in the way of privatization efforts that will get the economy moving."

Brown also said he wants the carrot of US aid to spur Cairo toward warmer ties with Jerusalem.

"We first need to send a signal that the aid package is unacceptable," American sources want to do the job wide and accept a semi-closed border. This is about developing a membership in the region, not subsidizing an armed force.

"So yes, our leverage has everything to do with it, but I think, moreover, the aid itself ought to be focused on developing regional trade."

Brown emphasized that neither his plan, nor other promises on Capitol Hill to trim America's foreign-aid budget, would alter America's total package for Egypt.

"I think for Republicans, the Middle East peace efforts are a top priority, and the savings in foreign assistance will come out of other areas — than the Middle East."

He also said the proposal "should be seen for what it is, and that is an effort to help Egypt, not an effort that hostile to Egyptian interests."

El-Sayed agreed and said he did not expect Brown to move ahead unilaterally.

In the long term, el-Sayed said, Cairo understands that American aid is "not something you can count on forever." But he defended his country's current military package as necessary for maintaining "a strong Egyptian armed force, which is a force for peace and for stability and for defense against aggressive intentions. [and] is an absolute necessity for the whole area."

He acknowledged, too, that the pro-Israel lobby and the Israeli Embassy have historically been "helpful" in advocating continued support for the "Camp David" countries — meaning both Israel and Egypt.

As a congressional staffer familiar with the matter pointed out, even with fiscal constraints looming, traditional recipients are safe for now.

"Once you talk about cutting assistance to a Camp David country, you're stepping into a mine field," he said.

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Sexism in the IDF: Real women don't wear combat boots

The debate over women's roles and jobs in the IDF has been fueled by fiery new controversy. Alon Pinkas reports

THE past few weeks have not been the best for the country's women. A battered Kiryat Shmona woman was murdered early last month by her husband who had served time for abuse.

Last Wednesday, Deputy Knesset Speaker Esther Salmovitz was accosted by a group of unruly MKs who accused her of trying to sneak in a no-confidence vote. After the incident she said Deputy Minister Mordechai Gur had told her her behavior was "slutty."

Attacks on women then moved to the IDF when Col. Gershon Hacohen, head of the 7th Armored Brigade, told high school seniors that, traditionally, men are warriors and women are prostitutes.

Computers and answering machines can replace women in the IDF, he added.

His insult to women was topped off by none other than the president, Ezer Weizman, who allegedly called Arts and Science Minister Shulamit Aloni a "thick-headed old bag."

Yet Hacohen's remarks were probably the most scathing. The remarks struck a chord throughout the nation, whose daughters, wives and mothers have served in the IDF.

Although Hacohen apologized for the remarks and was reprimanded, his statements questioned the need to have women in the military.

"I resent the question. The issue is whether the army needs all the manpower it gets, not women or men. I don't believe a comprehensive study of



Can female soldiers be replaced by fax machines? Recent sexist comments have raised a ruckus, and also some serious issues. (IDF)

that was ever made," says Brig.-Gen. Israel Oron, recently appointed Chief of the Women's Corps.

Criticism of Hacohen's remarks was not universal, and was even lauded by the haredi press.

The Agudat Yisrael daily, *Hamodot*, wrote last Friday that "this is a good opportunity to raise again the issue of compulsory service for women and demand that it be reversed."

"Maybe that would strengthen the army's poor morals," one article suggested. In another article, the paper's

editor in chief, Moshe Akiva Druk, found a connection between the IDF's morals and the accidents and tragedies that befall it.

"If a brigade commander as experienced as Gershon Hacohen questions the prudence of enlisting women, we should back him rather than reprimand him as his superiors suggest," Druk wrote.

Shas MK Shlomo Benizri said many women soldiers can be replaced by fax machines. While Hacohen's style should not be condoned, Benizri said,

what he said reflects what many think. "When I enlisted, men were called 'fresh beef' and women were 'fresh mattresses'... many religious girls who join the army become secular. That is why the Halacha forbids them to join the army," Benizri said last week.

United Torah Judaism MK Avraham Ravitz condemned the attacks on Hacohen, and said the army is wasting resources on corrupting women soldiers. Israel is the only country in the world that has compulsory military service for women. David Ben-Gurion called the

1953 law "the ultimate equality, that of responsibility and duty, not just rights." This has led to the myth that Israeli women are equal to men in the IDF. Except for 1948, when women in the Palmah fought in defensive units, the widely perceived notion of women being fighters was never true.

In all instances when women held front-line roles, such as radio operators, medics or intelligence officers, they were hurriedly evacuated once hostilities broke out.

That was the case during the 1969-70

War of Attrition, and in both Sinai and the Golan during the Yom Kippur War.

The army gives four main reasons for keeping women out of combat units. First is the theological explanation that a woman's role is to reproduce. Then there is the manpower argument - there are enough men to fill combat units. Next is the physical issue. While women are biologically stronger, they cannot withstand the rigorous physical demands of combat. Last is the sexual issue: Women may become sexual distractions for men during training or, worse, in combat. Also, if a woman is taken prisoner, she is likely to be raped.

Ostensibly, more and more roles are open to women today. They are tank and artillery instructors, infantry weapons instructors, radar operators, intelligence branch assessors, naval intelligence staff, air traffic controllers, and more. But only about 3 percent of women serve in field positions.

None of the eight women accepted into a 1979 pilots course succeeded, and, at present, a number of women are fighting the IDF's rejection of their requests to join the pilots-training course.

"We are now scanning the entire array of roles and jobs in the army, and looking where women can be deployed. There are new roles open, such as drivers in training centers or observation and surveillance specialists," Oron says.

Compulsory service still exists for social reasons, as an equalizer, but today the army discharges women more easily and does not enlist thousands it could enlist each year.

Colonel (res.) Nava Peles, formerly the commander of Bahad-12, the central basic training camp for women, said earlier in the week that the entire Women's Corps is no longer necessary and that conscription should not be compulsory, but based on need.

In 1992, the mandatory two-year women's service was cut to 22 months, and then to 21 in 1993. Recently, the IDF announced plans to cut service to 19 months.

But Meretz MK Naomi Chazan said that would only increase inequality between the sexes.

By cutting the period available for training courses, the IDF would reduce women to little more than coffee-ladies, she said.

Proud to be serving their country

Despite the lack of equality in the IDF, several women say they did not have a bad experience, writes Judith Sudilovsky

WOMEN in the IDF may disagree about the way they are treated, but they all agree that serving in the army is an initiation rite into Israeli society.

"It's important to serve in the army. If I meet somebody who hasn't done the army I immediately ask why not," said Jerusalemite Michal Ziperfal, 26, who served as a counselor in the Gadna paramilitary youth organization. "It's one of the life experiences which helps to form you as a person in Israel. It helped me with my self-confidence and leadership abilities, even if it didn't help me professionally."

Ziperfal met her husband in the army and went on to study architecture at the Technion in Haifa.

For Tamar, 21, it was very important to serve in the army despite the fact that she was religious. Tamar, who left religion during the army, asked that her last name not be used.

"I didn't have to serve but I wanted to be in the army," she said. "But I would be lying to you if I said that I wanted to do it to serve my country. I just wanted to have the army experience, to meet different people and leave home for two years."

At first Tamar was a teacher in the Education Branch, but then asked for a transfer because she was living in an apartment with four other women soldiers, and



Michal Ziperfal believes that serving in the army is a life experience an Israeli needs to develop as a person. (Sara Uziel)

the only thing that reminded her that she was in the army was her uniform.

She was then made a personnel secretary in the Givati Brigade.

"I wanted to be attached to a brigade. I did a lot of paper work, answered the phones, filled out forms. It wasn't the most challenging position and it didn't make use of my intellectual abilities, but if you were a good worker you could help a lot of soldiers," said Tamar, who now studies chemistry at the Hebrew University.

Though there were also male clerks, they were never asked to type a letter or throw out the garbage as the female clerks

were, Tamar noted. They were also given the higher-ranking title of noncommissioned personnel officer, even though she knew her entrance-exam scores were higher than those of most of the male clerks, she said.

It was made clear to the female clerks that one of the duties of the company clerk was to make the soldiers feel good, Tamar added.

"It's like an unwritten rule that they only take good-looking girls to be company clerks. They want you to be nice to the soldiers and spoil them, and I don't mean just

by giving them cake," said Tamar.

But then again, she said, there never has been any equality between the sexes in a brigade. She said she was not surprised by what Col. Gershon Hacohen said. He was only verbalizing what many people think, and what she had heard her direct commander say in the field.

Despite all that, she enjoyed her army service and the chance it gave her to be in a different social setting, she said.

Of course, she said, not all women soldiers end up being company clerks in fighting units, and so they have a different army experience in terms of the way they are treated by the male soldiers.

"The army needs other manpower than just men," said Ziperfal. "If they didn't draft women there wouldn't be enough men to fill all the clerical positions. But since they need women they also have to make the effort - which I believe they are making - to give women positions other than just secretaries."

Genela Rubinstein, 23, worked in the IDF Spokesman's Office with the foreign press.

"Women serve in different positions in the army, but it doesn't necessarily mean the men's experience is better. Women also serve in intelligence and they do the same work as the men," said Rubinstein, who now studies psychology and business administration at the Hebrew University.

"The experience you get from your job is what you make of it. Even if you are a clerk you can show them what you are capable of doing and they will give you more responsibility."

Even though her position was interesting and Rubinstein never felt any discrimination or harassment, a part of her feels that her army service was wasted time.

"If serving in the army was voluntary, I don't think I would go," said Rubinstein. "I have other things to do with my life."

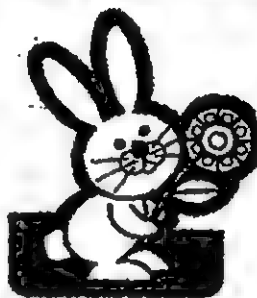
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Metulla Local Council

Metulla - 100 years old
1896-1996

Metulla, Israel's northernmost settlement, will be 100 years old in 1996. The local council is organizing celebrations which will commence in June, 1995, and continue for one year. The Mayor of Metulla is very anxious to contact everyone who has ever lived in Metulla, so that he/she can be a part of this very special occasion.

If you have ever had contact with Metulla, please contact: Yossi Goldberg, Mayor of Metulla, P.O.B. 1, Metulla 10292, Israel. Tel. 06-941364, Fax: 06-997211.

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Radio cuts make waves abroad

Cuts in Israel Radio's foreign broadcasts angered many, who call the move a 'false economy.' Helen Kaye reports

SOME time ago there was a massive campaign to find a donor for a life-saving bone-marrow transplant. The appeal also went over one of Israel Radio's daily shortwave broadcasts.

A listener in Britain, touched by the story, faxed the radio information on the current status of bone-marrow donors, and wrote at the end of the fax: "Please don't stop your broadcasts, because they're much more important than you realize."

On January 23 the Israel Broadcasting Authority cut back English and French shortwave broadcasts to 55 minutes per day; transmission now ends at 10:30 p.m. local time rather than at 1 a.m.

The conflict is one of economics versus perceived need. The authority says the cuts will save it between NIS 800,000 and NIS 1 million annually. Opponents say that cutting back shortwave broadcasts to the Diaspora is shortsighted and stupid, especially now when so much of the reporting on Israel is covertly or overtly hostile.

And the cuts are perhaps making more waves than the authority bargained for. The IBA plenum is demanding a reassessment. The Ministry of Science, Communication and the Arts has demanded a report from IBA

head Mordechai Kirschenbaum, and listeners are protesting.

The bone-marrow story comes from David Broza, spokesman for the British Olim Society. Broza says he's been getting rumbles from Jewish organizations in the countries the society represents — the UK, Australia, New Zealand, Germany and Scandinavia — because "all of the international world speaks English and these broadcasts from Israel Radio provide the only authentic local voice."

"Look at [the] Beit Lid [bombing in which 21 people were killed]. For the foreign news services it was just another international story. Only we could speak of the anguish and pain."

"Tourists listen to the news in English and then they go back to their countries and keep listening. For Jews it's a way of keeping in touch with what's going on here."

"For goodness' sake, let's not trot out all those tired old Zionist slogans," says Itamar Bartov somewhat irritably. "We all know how important those broadcasts are." Bartov is senior adviser on telecommunications to minister Shulamit Aloni.

The same week the cuts went into effect the minister asked Kirschenbaum to submit a report on the costs of transmissions abroad. "Once we have an orderly report we can decide how to move. Either we'll take the money from the ministry's funds or we'll need to approach the Treasury," Bartov says.

According to IBA spokesman Zvi Lidar, economy alone dictated the cuts.

"The IBA accumulated a NIS 50 million deficit last year. Most of it was because of the peace broadcasts, the costs of sending crews to Washington, Casablanca and Oslo. Inflation

last year was 14.5 percent and don't forget that our costs have gone up enormously because of the competition from cable TV and Channel 2. For instance, where we could formerly rent a first-run movie for about \$5,000, now it's \$50,000."

"Because of the deficit, we've had orders from the Treasury to fire 240 people. That NIS 1 million in foreign broadcast cuts is going to save eight to 10 jobs. Don't forget, we're broadcasting in another 14 languages besides English, French and Russian. They get 15 minutes daily as against an hour each for French and English and three hours-plus for Russian."

Budget figures for 1995 aren't available, but the 1994 radio budget was NIS 143.3m., of which foreign broadcast costs were 14 percent, or NIS 20m.

SHORTWAVE nighttime broadcasting from Israel Radio began in 1979 with news and other programming at 2, 3 and 4 a.m. in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Yiddish and easy Hebrew. Until 1989 there were eight English-language transmissions daily around the clock to cover all the time zones in English-speaking countries.

Shortwave broadcasts go out over transmitters owned by the Communications Ministry but maintained and operated by Bezek. The IBA pays Bezek a base rate of NIS 500,000 to NIS 600,000 annually for one broadcast hour 364 days of the year. This doesn't include VAT or the surcharges imposed for Saturday or evening broadcasts, and even then "the IBA is getting a deal because Bezek loses on these broadcasts," says Arik Bukova, a Bezek accountant. The IBA's Lidar says Bezek now gets about NIS 10m. annually.

Most of the funding — nearly NIS 20 million annually in today's terms — came from the Jewish Agency (NIS 13m.) and the Foreign Ministry (NIS 6.7m.), both of which had been funding foreign broadcasts for 20 years. In 1989 both bodies pulled their subsidies because of cutbacks in their own organizations.

The IBA began pulling in its shortwave horns in '91 by cutting all nighttime broadcasts after 1 a.m., and last year it slashed English broadcasting still more. These latest cuts reduce the number of broadcasts to three for a total of 55 minutes.

Lidar maintains that were it not for the huge deficit the IBA has incurred it would continue funding the pre-cut levels of broadcasting — around two hours for English and French and four for Russian — as it has done ever since the Jewish Agency and the Foreign Ministry pulled out six years ago.

The Jewish Agency says that, as a government body, and because it requires a fee from the taxpayer, the IBA is morally obliged to continue this important service to the Diaspora. Yehiel Leket, acting head of the Agency and an IBA plenum member, says he can point to "a whole row of expenses that the IBA could cut before its broadcasts abroad," but he doesn't specify what they are.

Fellow plenum member Yosef Frenkel has gone further. Last week he and colleague Rahel Kremerman demanded that IBA chairman Micha Yonon convene the plenum for a review of the cutbacks. Lidar says cutbacks were effected following authorization from the plenum. Frenkel says the plenum never even discussed the matter and he "read of the cutbacks in the paper."

According to Frenkel, "we were hastily summoned to a meeting of the finance committee to discuss the matter. I wasn't there and heard that only about five or six plenum members were. This is a serious matter. That is why I've demanded a full plenum."

There have been rumors that IBA management is leaning heavily on employees to say nothing to anybody about the cutbacks. This reporter got a panicked reaction following a request for broadcast times. Frenkel says he has heard nothing about any pressure from above, "but if this is true, then it's a grave and I shall certainly demand an explanation."

They're officers — but not gentlemen

THE WEEK THAT WAS

MICHAEL YUDELMAN

INTERNATIONAL Mothers' Day was marked in these parts by a concerted attack on Jewish mothers actual and potential across society's spectrum — from the lofty cabinet to the lowliest IDF typing pool.

Is this perhaps an old Jewish tradition? In a newly published memoir of Isaac Bashevis Singer, his translator Lester Goran remembers the irascible writer fulminating after a university classroom debate that "women are such whores. They are unbearable." Was our colonel merely making a literary allusion?

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and President Ezer Weizman were in fine form as they zeroed in on Shulamit Aloni, scholar and minister — and, unfortunately, woman.

Rabin did it at one of those "closed" cabinet meetings — an adjectival absurdity since even he knows full well that their contents leak faster than water through a sieve into the next morning's headlines.

In the acid tone formerly reserved for right-wing mockery of the "treacherous" left and other low-lives, he told Aloni that, while she was concerned about Palestinians, he was concerned about Israelis.

Weizman's observations were in "private" — equally absurd, since the eavesdroppers were Knesset members. In the ultimate argumentum ad feminam, he attacked not her opinions but her age, gender and sexuality. The observations were so juicy that they had to be bleeped out in both electronic and printed media.

Aloni, in the considered presidential view, is "a dried up old (bleep) in need of a (bleep)."

If only because they savaged just one woman, Rabin and Weizman paled before Colonel Gershon Hacohen, who demolished the entire female race. Hacohen, who commands the Seventh Division but not, apparently, his mouth, explained to the pre-draft schoolchildren how only men can be warriors, just as only women can be whores.

This lesson in generalization followed hard upon one of the noisiest, most violent fracas ever seen in the testosterone-crazed Knesset. On the receiving end was Acting Speaker Esther Salomovitz, whose bumbling bid to call a vote that could have toppled the government was not just "stupid" or "unfortunate" but, in the succinct phrase of Deputy Defense Minister Mordechai Gur, "sluttish."

"Had I been a man, he wouldn't have talked to me in that way," Salomovitz whined later. Oh, dear, Esther, was that the best you could manage?

Rabin, Weizman, Gur and Hacohen may be officers but they are certainly no gentlemen. Cads and bouncers, maybe, singing the sad swan song of old soldiers whose time has come to f-f-fade away.

NOT WITH A BANG, BUT A WHIMPER

In this storm of turmoil, an island of sanity and civility suddenly appeared — the last mammoth convention of the Histadrut. Not a whore or a slut or a bleep to be heard in the genteel air. The only flap came from the last socialist-realist Bulgarian suits, the only tinkle from the teacups.

The only gurgle had already come when the new health law slit the Histadrut's financial jugular. The convention was the funeral. The old world was ending, not with a bang, but with a whimper.

In the midst of death, little was apparent of the "new life" faction and its dramatic reforms promised by chairman Haim Ramon. Labor had managed to ward off his worst changes, and to water down the rest.

The most dramatic reform of the oh-so-revolutionary convention was to change the Histadrut's name to "the New General Histadrut [Federation] of Workers in Eretz Yisrael."

So what do we call it for short instead of "Histadrut," I asked? "Why — 'Histadrut,' I asked? 'Why — 'Histadrut,' stupid woman!"

Histadrut parliament chairman MK Ran Cohen, of Ram's Meretz faction, won a satisfying victory over Shas when he valiantly and single-handedly halted the custom of glatt-kosher meals at Histadrut conventions, saving NIS 90,000. Despite Shas's vociferous objections, he ordered only the 150 glatt-kosher meals required for Shas delegates. The other 1,350 were not quite treif but — horror of horrors — just kosher.

Dazed Davar-aiks, meanwhile, cruised the crowded convention foyer trying to make sense of a



Shohat had a tough week, while Aloni was allegedly insulted by the president.



countdown — for the first time in 70 years since the Histadrut-owned newspaper was established, they were out in the cold, out of the Histadrut.

The dinosaur went on to vote itself extinct. The Histadrut's next parley will consist of a mere 601 delegates instead of this week's 1,501. And one more major reform — the convention closed to the tender strains of "Hatikva," rather than the stirring, fist-pounding "International" which had drummed shut every Histadrut convention for 70 years.

Some speculate that Ramon may temporarily switch step to a different tune if Rabin invites him to be finance minister.

Over Shohat's dead body, some may say.

Well, after Ramon's terminal work on the Histadrut, that's easily arranged.

PLANK TIME

A month ago, the press crowned Shohat the winner in the capital pains tax struggle, after Rabin firmly declared he would implement it.

Dear me, a week is a long time in politics, as Harold Wilson observed.

Now that Shohat himself has announced the cancellation of the tax, the same commentators have been calling for his head.

A TV diplomatic correspondent even predicted that if Rabin didn't fire Shohat right away, he would quit anyway as the nation slices open its (probably late) collective pay slip and peers into the black hole left by the ill-begotten health law, increased national insurance, and organization fees.

Even as he announced the death of the bourse tax, the press was voting Shohat to No. 1 slot on Captain Rabin's walk-the-plank list. Media doctors diagnosed him shattered, stunned, humiliated.

The condemned man, however, appeared to be enjoying a hearty meal in the Knesset cafeteria mere minutes after the fatal press conference. Witnesses testified that his appetite was not in the least impaired.

Next day he toured the North, grinning widely. "You see," he said in case we missed it, "I'm smiling. I look good and I feel good." A man is judged not by an isolated event, but over a period of time, he said. He didn't explain whether this is a good thing or a bad thing.

Unlike the journalists and commentators, it appears Shohat has no problem with Shohat remaining in the cabinet.

"Why should he resign?" asked a senior Labor source. "Because reporters say so? If Shohat should resign, then so should the economic and political journalists."

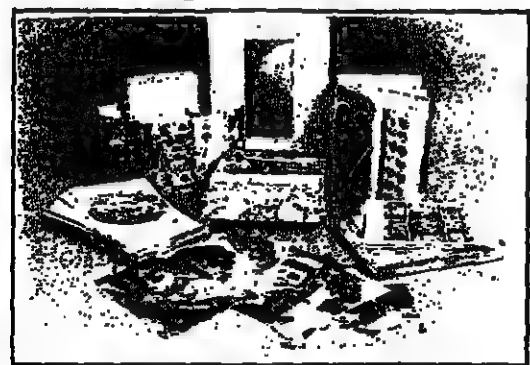
"It's all bullshit," the source continued, warning to his thesis. "These are the same journalists who supported Ramon and the health law and attacked [Labor secretary-general Nissim] Zvili for opposing it. Now they are calling it a disaster and saying the health tax will make us all sick as parrots."

THE JERUSALEM POST

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Restaurant owner feels the bite of areas closure

REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK

RAINE MARCUS

HEZY, the owner of one of the best (and cheapest) hummus restaurants in Tel Aviv, was in a bad mood this week.

"The police came and took away all my workers," he moaned. "Where were they from?"

"The West Bank, I think. Maybe Gaza. Who knows? They've worked for me for years. They were fine. No problem."

What about Russians? There must be plenty of immigrants who need work.

"They don't like doing manual labor. The Arabs are the best. I've never had laborers who can work like them. Everybody else is lazy."

About six months ago, Hezy employed a Russian immigrant, recommended to him by a friend.

The immigrant, who admitted he wasn't Jewish, worked well and got on with customers. He

communicated by using a strange blend of Russian, illiterate Hebrew and sign language.

Then one day I dropped by for a snack of *ful* and hummus, and there was no sign of Vladislav.

"Where is he?" I asked.

"Gone," Hezy replied, throwing his hands up in despair. "He left yesterday. He told me he only wanted to work for six months because he was entitled to unemployment benefit after that time."

I told Hezy that another restaurant owner employed Colombian kitchen workers. Illegally, but who cares? Authorities apparently turn a blind eye because no Colombian laborer has stabbed his employer or carried 10 kilograms of explosives in order to kill and maim scores of people.

"Find me a Colombian," he said, excitedly. "I'll pay him a great salary. Starting now."

The Histadrut 150

Our very own prize

CHESS

NIGEL DAVIES

IN memory of Dr. Benjamin Samuel, a general medical practitioner who died in Nahariya, his relatives set up a fund for a chess prize, and I was approached for advice on a suitable competition.

We finally decided on a "Benjamin Samuel Best Game Competition" to be held under the auspices of *The Jerusalem Post*. The competition will be run annually and is open to all Israeli citizens and residents.

This inaugural event is for games played in 1994. To enter, send your best game from 1994, including annotations, details of when and where it was played and a photocopy of your identity card. Entries should be sent to: Nigel Davies (Chess), *The Jerusalem Post*, 5 Rehov Hamasger, Tel Aviv, to arrive no later than March 10, 1995. Only one entry is allowed per player.

There will be a main prize of NIS 400 and also a NIS 200 prize for the best game by any player under 18 years of age on December 31, 1994. *The Jerusalem Post* will award two trophies. The winning entries will be announced in March and the games published in this column.

What constitutes a "best game"? This is a rather subjective matter: it could be a brilliant attack, a nice endgame or a smooth positional performance.

As the judge I can say I am open to all types of entry, but I am looking for something a bit out of the ordinary, something exceptional, something that reflects the depth and beauty of the human spirit! It is possible to conduct a beautiful and original defense or lend a fascinating twist to an apparently mundane endgame.

Dr. Samuel was born in Tredgar, Wales, in 1910. Graduating at 16, he entered medical school at the Cardiff Royal Infirmary. During a short spell of work at the London Jewish Hospital, he met his future wife Lisa, who was a nurse.

In 1936, he opened a practice in Llanharan in South Wales. At

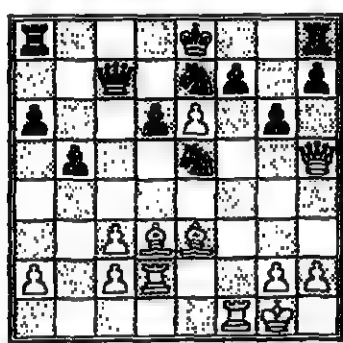
the outbreak of World War II this area became rather isolated and people were left to their own resources. Accordingly Dr. Samuel taught some of his flock to play chess, arranged with colleagues in nearby villages to do the same and organized competitions between the teams.

In the early 1940s Dr. Samuel read that the famous chess master Jacques Mieses had settled in London as a refugee. The Samuels invited him to be a guest in their home and for several weeks the chess entertained their many friends.

To help defray the master's expenses, Dr. Samuel advertised a simultaneous display to be held at Cardiff's Cory Hall. The display drew a massive 71 participants. Mieses won 68 games and drew 3.

In 1948 the Samuels went to live in Los Angeles where again Dr. Samuel organized chess in his spare time, until his aliya in 1970. He also started a chess club in Nahariya.

MIKHAIL TAL played some of the most beautiful games in chess history and his name has become synonymous with the intuitive sacrifice. The following position is from a game he played in 1969 against Alexei Suetin.



Solution: Tal breached his opponent's defenses with the spectacular queen sacrifice, 1.Qxe5!!, and after 1...dxe5 2.exf7+ Black resigned. After 2...Kf8 there is immediate mate with 3.Bh6, after 2...Kd8 there is 3.Bf5+ Nd5 4.Bg5+ and after 2...Kd7 there is 3.Bf5+ Kc6 4.Be4+ etc.



The hooded crow is easily recognized by its gray neck and back. (Rahamin Israeli)

As the crow flies

NATURE

D'VORA BEN SHAUL

ALMOST everyone recognizes the major birds of the *Corvidae* family. The hooded crow, *Corvus corone* in Latin (*orev asor* in Hebrew) is easily differentiated by its gray neck and back against a black plumage background. Hooded crows are found in most parts of the country.

The brown-necked raven, *Corvus ruficollis* (*orev hum oref* in Hebrew) is the commonest of the ravens here. It is especially plentiful in the Negev and the Arava and looks very much like the common, or ordinary raven, *Corvus corax* (*orev shahor* in Hebrew) but has a distinctive reddish-brown tinge on the sides and the back of the neck.

No one can help but notice the bright blue jay, *Garrulus glandarius*, or *orani* as every Israeli

schoolchild knows it. Like all the other birds of the *Corvidae* family, the jay is noisy and hard to miss. Also, like other members of the family, it's highly intelligent, possibly even more so than any other group of birds.

The jackdaw maintains a few permanent colonies here. This bird, *Corvus monedula* (*ka'ak* in Hebrew) is actually a fairly small raven. It lives and travels in colonies and is distinguished by an overlay of gray on the sides and the back of the neck.

H.B. Tristram wrote about the jackdaw colony in Har Ibel near Nabulus back in the 1860s, and the other major colony in the caves of Beit Guvrin has also been observed for more than 100 years.

But most of the jackdaws seen here are winter visitors. They are spectacular flyers, making a fine display in the skies, especially in the Hula Valley and Upper Galilee, all winter long. They are noisy and spend many hours

feeding in fields on grain, fruit and insects.

The other winter visitor is the rook, *Corvus frugilegus* (*orev hamizra* in Hebrew). Rooks once wintered here in large numbers but were totally eradicated by agricultural poisoning in the 1950s, and for a number of years did not appear in Israel at all. But they've made a slow comeback and can now be seen in the winter skies, particularly in the area of the Hula and Jordan valleys.

They look very much like all the crows with their bluish-tinted black plumage. But their fluffy tufts of grayish-blue feathers at the base of the bill are distinguishing features.

All these species are omnivorous, gregarious, clever and innovative in their behavior. *Corvidae* are possessed of good memories and will recognize a person or animal that they consider an "enemy" even after several years.

When seeing such an adversary, they have a habit of joining together and swooping down on him while uttering truly astonishing, cacophonous cries.

Champs, kibitzers in exciting mix

BRIDGE

MATTHEW GRANOVETTER

South dealer
Neither side vulnerable

North
♠ 1073
♥ Q97
♦ 64
♣ K9643

West (Forrester)
♠ 85
♥ 643
♦ 8532
♣ AQJ7

East (Hoffman)
♠ AK42
♥ K52
♦ A107
♣ 852

South
♠ QJ96
♥ AJ108
♦ KQJ9
♣ 10

Forrester North Hoffman
1♠ pass 2♠ pass 3♠ pass
2♦ double 2♥ pass 3♥ pass
2♣ double (all pass) 3♣ pass

Opening lead: ♠Q

THE highlight of the bridge season begins next week when more than 20 countries are represented in the Israeli International Bridge Festival.

The competition is open to everyone, so there will be a wide range of talent, from intermediate players to world champions. If you are not inclined to play, you can kibitz. It's lots of fun to watch and listen to the top players.

The first event is a mixed-team championship, which requires four to six people on a team, and every partnership must have a man and a woman.

This takes place on February 9, at the Moriah Hotel in Tel Aviv. Game time for the first of two sessions is 4 p.m.; show up at least an hour earlier for tickets.

Admission to each session costs NIS 40. Prize money for the mixed teams will be NIS 2,200 for the team that takes first place, NIS 1,600 for second, and NIS 1,100 for third.

Events at the Israel Convention Center at the Tel Aviv Fairgrounds are: mixed pairs on February 12 (two sessions, 4 p.m.); open pairs, two sessions February 13 and one on February 14 (4 p.m.); a single-session top-bottom game February 14 at 8 p.m.; a

one-session imp pairs at 4 p.m. February 15; and Swiss teams, starting February 15 at 8 p.m. and continuing February 16 at 4 and 8 p.m. Call 04-335333 for more information.

One of the international stars this year will be Martin Hoffman, a former Englishman now living in Florida.

Hoffman is the author of many bridge books and is a popular columnist in *Bridge Today* magazine.

He was sitting East in this week's deal, which occurred during the Lederer Memorial Cup a few months ago in London.

The bidding was poetic. It began with a one-diamond opening by South. West and North passed and Hoffman balanced with a takeout double.

West bid two clubs and, after two passes, South also balanced with a takeout double.

Hoffman's partner, Tony Forrester, now redoubled and this caused a bit of confusion for North-South.

Had Forrester passed two clubs doubled, North would also have passed and two clubs doubled would have become the final contract. This would probably have gone down two tricks.

But when Forrester redoubled, South was not sure that his partner wanted to play for penalties. He removed the bid to two diamonds, a poor decision.

West found the deceptive lead of the club queen. North played low from dummy, because he expected East to hold the ace. When the queen held, West shifted to the eight of spades.

Hoffman won and returned the eight of clubs. Declarer pitched a heart. West won and played a second spade.

Hoffman won and gave West a spade ruff. West now exited with a trump, won by Hoffman, who made the final devastating blow for the defense by returning a fourth round of spades.

West ruffed with the eight of diamonds and still had a trump to get off lead, so Hoffman scored his king of hearts as well, for down three.

In the other room, Hoffman's teammates played in two hearts by South, and made eight tricks.

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CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- Appropriate place for an actor to immerse himself (2,9)
- Church has entered the hunt (5)
- Jackson means to bat with caution (9)
- Manage to define episcopal jurisdiction (7)
- Two-way ticket to the wilds of Oz (7)
- A shade sanctimonious in the main (5)
- Tense declaration of total self-satisfaction (9)
- Become heated on German jingoism (9)
- Beg for cocaine before Acid-House party (5)
- Salesman gets fed up with programmes seen before (7)

DOWN

- Old Baltic capital noted for Japanese art (7)
- Tommy gets no backing, but has to persevere (7,2)
- Diana represented the spirit of spring (5)
- Disperse again to bring in part of the harvest (11)
- Furious because entire map is ruined (2,1,6)
- Mia Clinton is in London (7)
- Corresponding to all the points in a circle (9)
- A couple of attempts over and above (1,4)
- A chirpy speaker (7)
- Army men get a word of thanks for producing a lasso (5)

SOLUTIONS

Yesterday's Quick Solution

ACROSS: 1. Warren, 4. Tease, 8. Right, 9. Restroom, 10. Alimony, 11. Foss, 12. Hug, 14. Unit, 15. Romp, 18. Yet, 21. Ewer, 23. Astound, 25. Avocado, 26. Igloo, 27. Lavec, 28. Cypher.

DOWN: 1. Warsaw, 2. Regular, 3. Entrance, 4. Toss, 5. Agree, 6. Eaming, 7. Truth, 13. Century, 16. Maudlin, 17. Recall, 19. Talon, 20. Adroit, 22. Ebony, 24. Lure.

QUICK CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- Edifice (8)
- Quotes (5)
- Colleague (9)
- Relatives (3)
- Small wooded hollow (4)
- Jovous (6)
- Top-ranking angel (6)
- Consume greedily (6)
- Pointless (6)
- Upper-class gent (4)
- Mongrel (3)
- Whit Sunday (9)
- Pilfer (5)
- Perfidious act (8)

DOWN

- Insipid (5)
- Narrow-minded (7)
- Shorten the tail (4)
- Almost (6)
- Wager (5)
- Morose (7)
- Man-horse (7)
- Grave inscription (7)
- Name expressly (7)
- Study of animals (7)
- Fair-haired (6)
- Ruched strip (5)
- Deadly (5)
- Mock (4)

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INCREASING your range of plants by propagating seeds is one of the most rewarding aspects of gardening.

A cheap and easy way to begin is with an indoor seed box on a windowsill. I save plastic boxes from cookies and vegetables for all my indoor planting.

Punch some holes with the point of a knife or scissors in the bottom of each box for drainage. Then fill the box to a depth of 3 or 4 cm with some fresh compost and soil. Don't use soil from the garden - you'll regret it when the weeds come up together with your little seedlings.

Press the soil down firmly with a flat piece of board, or even your hand. Tamp down the soil well, to remove air pockets. Water the soil thoroughly with a fine spray. (If you water with a heavy stream from the faucet, you will see the dry soil float away down the drain.)

Then let your little tray stand undisturbed for a few hours so that the water can permeate all

GARDENING
INEZ KLIMIST

the soil.

Make grooves 3 cm. or 4 cm. apart by pressing a pencil or a ruler into the soil lengthwise. Now you are ready to plant.

Large seeds like morning glory benefit from overnight soaking in a saucer of water. (For specific directions, check the seeds' packet.) A general rule of thumb is to cover the seeds with soil only to twice the depth of the size of the seed. In other words, if you are planting poppies, the slightest dusting of soil to cover the seed is sufficient. Don't bury your seeds, only plant them, 2 cm. or 3 cm. apart.

If you are planting more than one box of seeds, don't forget to label them with the name of the flower. Just stick a piece of tape on the box, and keep the envelope safely in a kitchen drawer so that you can refer back to the

instructions. You may want to check height, preferred planting location or other information before planting in the garden. The envelopes tend to disintegrate if you stick them in the side of the box.

Now cover the planting boxes tightly with some clear plastic food wrap. Over the top of that, loosely place a newspaper. Seeds germinate better in the dark.

Keep the boxes at about 16°. Don't let them get too cold at night. Germination times differ greatly, so don't be upset if nothing happens in the first week or two.

When the first two leaves have formed, take off the paper and the plastic.

As the seedlings grow, keep the soil just barely damp, not wet. Use a very fine spray, such as an old window-cleaner bottle. Clean the bottle out thoroughly before you use it.

As the seedlings grow and become more crowded, remove some of the weaker ones to make space for the stronger ones to grow. Just snip them off at soil level.

When the plants have formed a second set of leaves you must transplant them, either in a larger tray, about 5 cm apart, or in individual pots. Pick up the seedlings, very gently by the leaves, not the stem, teasing them out of the soil with a sharp pencil.

Poke a hole with the pencil and dangle the roots into the new hole, gently packing the soil around them.

Keep the little plants growing in a sunny spot until they are large enough to set out into the garden. A very mild solution of fertilizer will help them along.

When they are ready to go into the garden, accustom the young plants to their outdoor spots by sheltering them from direct sun for a few days and giving them lots of water.

"Israel On the Map"
Real Estate
and Investment Supplements

Just before Pessah, *The Jerusalem Post* will publish special supplements, devoted to real estate and investments, in Israel.

The supplements will be published in the International Editions of March 20 and 27, and the daily paper of the festival eve, April 14.

For more information and to advertise in these supplement, please contact
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FEEDBACK

136

050-1111111



Mataji Indra Devi, 95, shows how it's done. Shiriyogi Amrit Desai leads a meditation class.



(Sarit Uziel)

Yogis from around the world meditate for peace

THEY came from Germany, Ukraine, Chile, India, California, Ireland and even Cairo. Some came in flowing saffron robes, others in saris, a couple in suits and ties, most in loose but normal-looking clothing and Birkenstocks.

They sat, all 500 of them, cross-legged on folded blankets on the floors of Ma'aleh Hahamisha, Kibbutz, Guest House, meditating with eyes closed, index fingers and thumbs forming a circle. They stood on their shoulders, toes pointing into the air, bent their bodies into bridges, breathed through tunnels formed by their tongues and sang Hindu chants.

They paid up to \$2,000 each, including airfare and hotel, to participate in a week-long Yoga for Peace conference held last week in an attempt to give a spiritual shot

in the arm to the peace process. (Israeli participants were charged NIS 500 for the week.)

"People came from more than 25 countries to express their caring and concern and longing for peace," says Rina Tawil, chair of the Israeli Yoga Teachers Association and conference organizer.

"We don't expect miracles. Instead of demonstrating for peace on street corners, we came together to do yoga, a philosophy and practice that stresses the unity of mankind."

Tawil was aboard a plane on her way to a yoga conference in Switzerland when she saw in its program that one of the leaders had an Arab name, Malek Daouk. She had an inspiration: "Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could bring Arab and Israeli yoga people to practice together and to express our desire for brotherhood and give this message to the world?"

Meanwhile, Rama Vernon, a Lebanese-American who had

Hindu chants mixed with Hebrew prayer in a week-long meet of yoga devotees intended to help the peace process. Ruth Mason reports.

founded several yoga and international dialogue organizations and who had worked on citizen peace initiatives between the US and USSR during the cold war, had been nurturing the same idea.

European yoga teachers Victor Van Kooten and Angela Framer, friends of both Tawil and Vernon, brought the two together and the Yoga for Peace conference was born.

WHEN ASKED how yoga could bring peace to the world, participant after participant from revered Indian gurus to yoga teachers from Ramat Gan to those new to the practice said essentially the same thing: Practicing yoga

brings inner peace and only when we have inner peace, can there be peace in the world.

Amrit Desai, a native of India who has been living in the US for decades, is the founder of the Kripalu Center for Yoga and Health in Massachusetts, perhaps America's most popular ashram. (Approximately 15 percent of the Kripalu's 300 residents, as well as many of its visitors, are Jewish.) Desai is a popular teacher who holds overflow seminars around the US. Why did he take the time to come to Israel?

"I came because yoga has a very meaningful contribution to offer to bring peace to every individual; that can eventually generate a powerful force to bring

peace in the world," the long-haired guru said. "When an individual practices yoga regularly, he is allowing his mind, body, and emotions to become calm, more balanced. When that happens, there is inner healing and peace naturally becomes an integral part of his life experience."

Yoga is "a technique and lifestyle that works," says Rochelle (Rambha) Beth Davis, one of the conference's American organizers. "It's a method that helps you with your stress. When you're more relaxed, you can turn anger into creativity; you don't have to strike out. Yogis understand all emotions are only energy. Learning how to direct energy in a positive way is our goal."

Observant Jews at the conference said yoga does not clash with an Orthodox lifestyle. "You can do yoga no matter what you think or believe," says Davis. This was reaffirmed by Diane Bloomfield, who came from Minnesota but lived here for six years and taught Torah for three years at Pardes Institute. She has combined her love of Torah with her love of yoga in classes in the US.

At Bloomfield's "Torah, Prayer and Yoga" workshop at the conference, she led participants through a morning service cum yoga practice. "We'll be taking some prayers from the *shaharit* [morning] service and learning to

be with them in our bodies," she said. "I spent years doing the prayers from my head. But I now see the *shaharit* service as a journey through our bodies."

So we lay on our blankets and breathed through the "sokef kefufim" (raise up those who are bowed down) blessing. It felt wonderful for this reporter's 40-something body to stretch in the early morning and to stretch in a Jewish way! I couldn't help thinking that this type of "Jewish yoga" would do wonders for all those stooped yeshiva *bochers* walking the streets of Jerusalem.

"New postures break old habits," Bloomfield told us.

In addition to attending yoga workshops during the day, participants woke at six every morning to gather for a world-peace prayer, authored by Masahisa Goi, a Hiroshima survivor. In the evenings, they lit candles, held hands and chanted Om, and listened to rabbis, priests, ministers and sheikhs who are peace activists.

After the conference, 60 participants were traveling to Gaza to see if they could help the peace process move forward in a more practical way.

JUST BEING in Israel was a powerful and positive experience for these yogis. Said Amrit Desai: "I am deeply moved to be here. I am touched by the beauty of Israel and of its people."

Desai also expressed interest in learning more about the Jewish tradition and Torah.

Tarek Awad Kadry, a Coptic Christian medical student from Cairo who was the only participant from an Arab country, had a

revelation that had nothing to do with yoga. Asked how he felt to be among Israelis for the first time, he said, "They are completely different from what we thought. We think they're enemies. But they are friends. I spent some time in Tel Aviv, and everywhere I went, when people found out I am an Egyptian, they welcomed me so warmly."

Kadry said 30 others from Cairo were invited to the conference, but he was the only one willing to go through the two months of security investigations he said are required if an Egyptian wants to travel to Israel.

Organizers tried hard to get Arab yoga teachers to come and were disappointed at the Arab turnout. In addition to Kadry, a Druze yoga teacher from Ushiya, there were several people of Lebanese descent who are now living abroad. Aside from difficulties posed by the political situation, Tawil said there simply are not very many yoga teachers in Arab countries. "Islam is not really open to yoga," she said.

Israelis may or may not have felt the energy generated by all the meditation, prayer, chanting and peaceful intention coming out of Ma'aleh Hahamisha last week but at least one non-yoga-practicing Israeli was grateful the conference took place.

"They provided something we really need - spiritual support for the peace process," said Jerusalem rabbi and peace activist Jeremy Milgrom, who addressed the conference. "These are people who are very refined and practiced at expressing and sharing spiritual sensitivity and I felt privileged to be in their presence."

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\$230,000 3 rm, apt., spacious, Nitzza Blvd.
\$330,000 Cottage, 6 rm., Ramat Poleg
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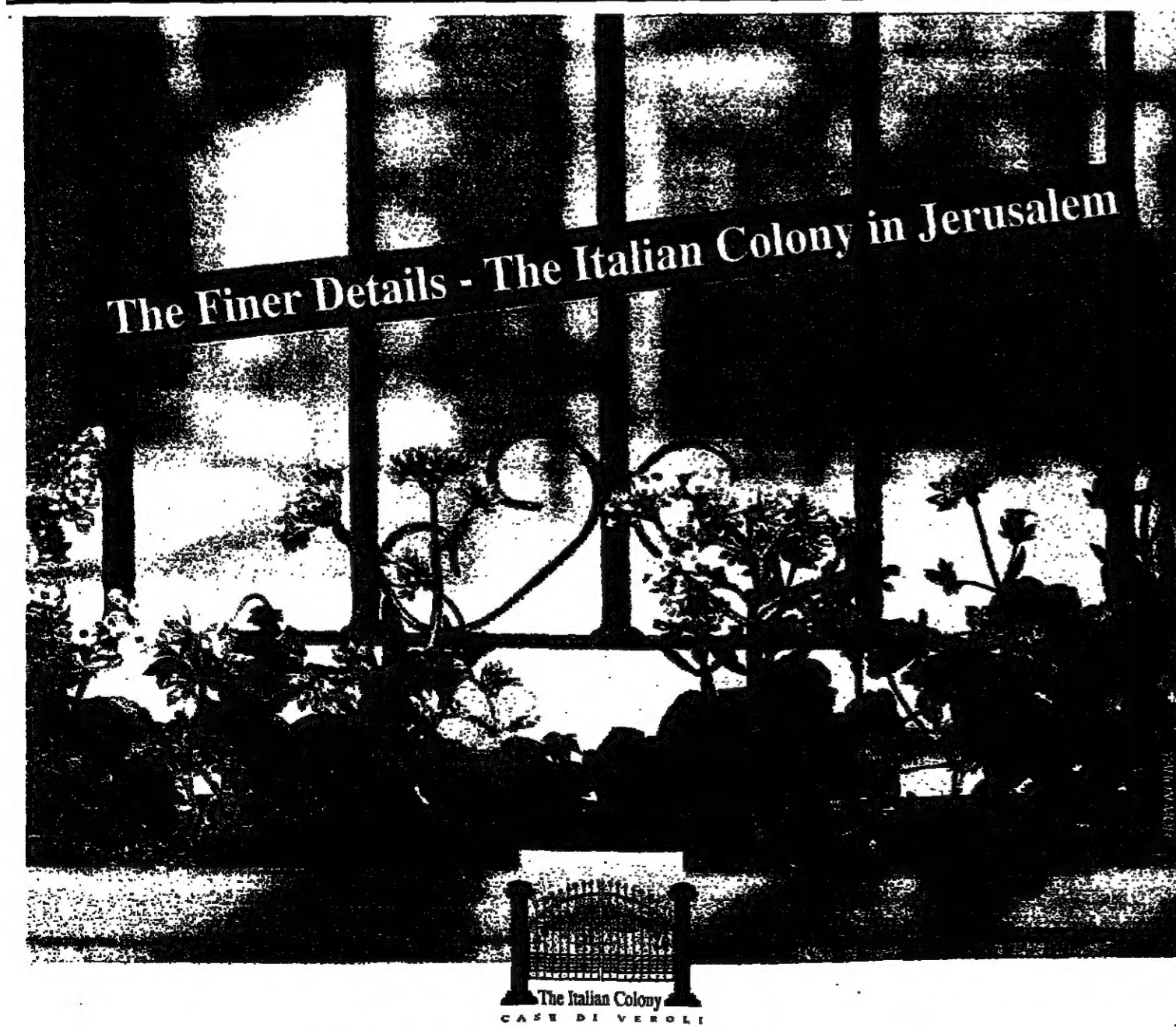
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Stockton breaks NBA assist record

Last-moment rally leads Maccabi past Pesaro

SALT LAKE CITY - John Stockton's record-setting assist was almost predestined: a crisp pass from near the foul line to the corner for a jump shot by Karl Malone.

But Malone's 5 1/2-meter jump shot, which gave Stockton his 9,922nd NBA career assist with 6:23 left in the first half against Denver on Wednesday night, nearly didn't happen.

A minute before, when Stockton's pass to Tom Chambers tied Magic Johnson's NBA record of 9,921 assists, Malone - the recipient of so many of Stockton's passes over the past decade - was on the bench.

"All the guys were looking at me and sort of saying, 'Why don't you go check in?' And I thought, 'I'm not the coach, I don't make those decisions,'" said Malone, who had 30 points in Utah's 129-88 victory over the Nuggets.

Jazz coach Jerry Sloan said he had good reason for cutting short Malone's stay on the bench: the crowd of 20,000 at Delta Center.

"I wasn't going to put Karl back in the game, but the people jumped on me pretty hard. This is a pretty big crowd and I couldn't fight them all off," Sloan said.

Seconds later, Malone was back on the floor - and Stockton's record-breaking pass came on the next play.

Officials stopped the game to announce Stockton's achievement, and as the crowd stood and roared for several minutes, the Utah bench emptied to congratulate the new assists leader.

After the game came a ceremony at center court, where Salt Lake Mayor Deedee Conrad proclaimed yesterday "John Stockton Day." Then came the highlight: taped congratulations from Johnson himself, played over the arena's television scoreboard.

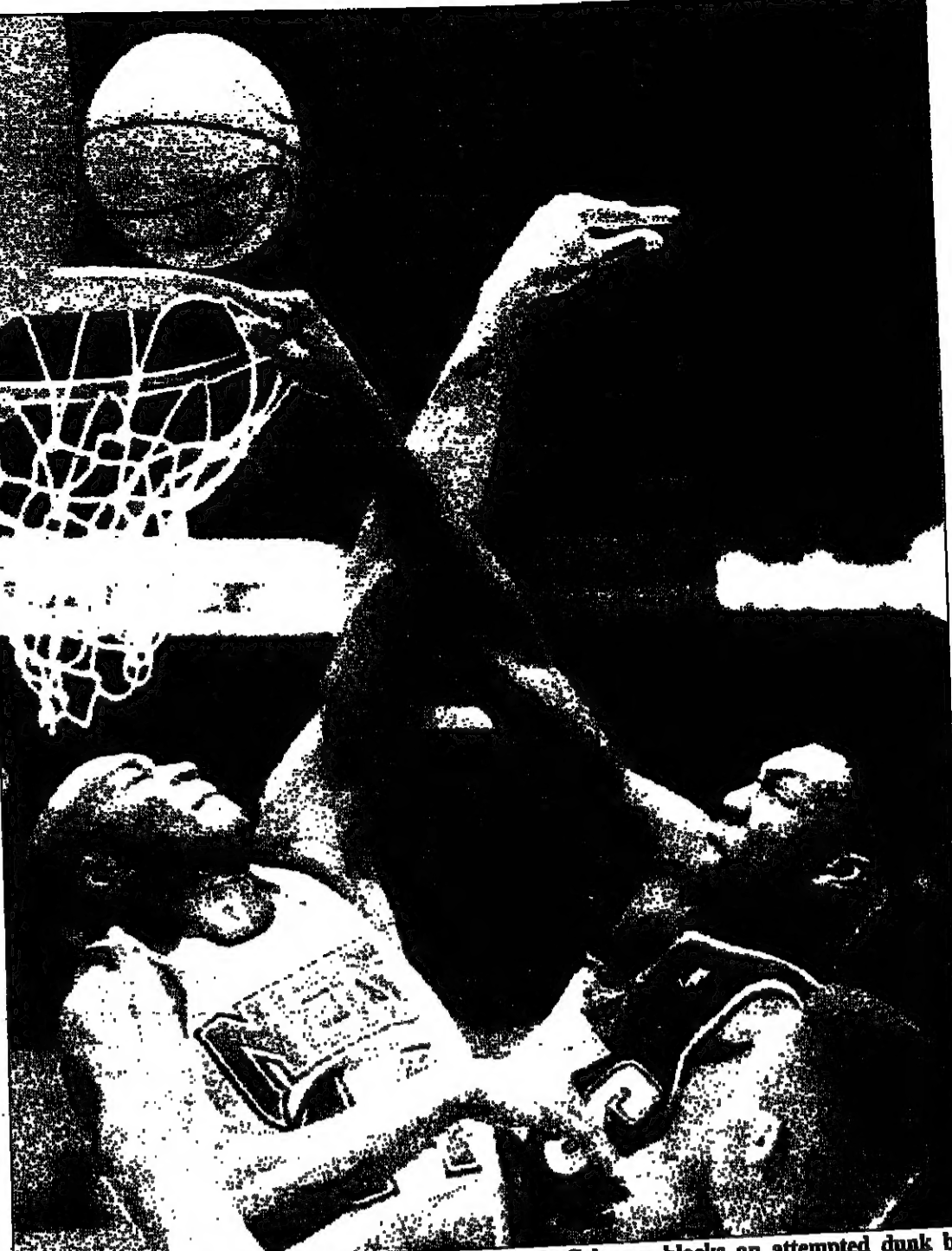
Nets 95, Bucks 77
Chris Morris scored 20 points, including six straight in a key fourth-quarter stretch, and added 11 rebounds to lead the host Nets to victory.

Glenn Robinson led the Bucks with 21 points.

Suns 118, Lakers 109
Denny Manning scored five of his 30 points during a key fourth-quarter run as the Suns recorded their ninth victory in 10 games.

Charles Barkley added 22 points and 15 rebounds, and Dan Majerle had 20 points, nine rebounds and nine assists for the Suns, who avenged one of their two home losses this season.

Eddie Jones scored 15 of his 26 points in the fourth quarter, Nick Van



THE BUCK STOPS HERE - New Jersey's Derrick Coleman blocks an attempted dunk by Milwaukee's Vin Baker.

Ezell had 21 points and 10 assists and Wade Davis added 23 points and 14 rebounds for the Los Angeles Lakers.

Phoenix's Wayman Tisdale suffered a separated rib cartilage. (AP, Reuters)

WEDNESDAY'S RESULTS:
Charlotte 100, Boston 93
Philadelphia 85, Washington 77
Miami 90, Detroit 75
Atlanta 111, Golden State 99
Indiana 101, Cleveland 82
Dallas 104, Minnesota 83
Utah 129, Denver 88
Phoenix 118, L.A. Lakers 109
San Antonio 111, Portland 107

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Midwest Division

	W	L	Pct.	GB
Utah	34	10	.773	
San Antonio	27	14	.659	5.5
Houston	26	15	.634	6.5
Denver	19	24	.442	14.5
Dallas	17	26	.395	16
Minnesota	10	33	.233	23.5

Pacific Division

	W	L	Pct.	GB
Phoenix	35	9	.795	
Seattle	28	16	.636	7
L.A. Lakers	26	15	.634	7.5
Sacramento	24	18	.571	10
Portland	22	20	.524	12
Golden State	12	28	.293	21.5
L.A. Clippers	7	37	.159	28

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct.	GB
Orlando	35	9	.814	
New York	28	16	.636	7
New Jersey	18	26	.409	17
Boston	18	27	.372	18
Atlanta	15	28	.349	21
Philadelphia	13	31	.295	23.5
Washington	11	30	.268	25

Central Division

	W	L	Pct.	GB
Chicago	28	16	.636	
Cleveland	28	17	.619	.5
Indiana	22	24	.478	6.5
Charlotte	22	24	.478	6.5
Atlanta	17	27	.383	11
Milwaukee	14	27	.341	12.5
Detroit	14	27	.341	12.5

A HEART-WARMING, never-say-die comeback in the final nail-biting minute brought Maccabi Tel Aviv an 80-75 victory over the Italian champion Scavolini Pesaro at Yad Eliyahu last night.

With 46 seconds left on the clock, the score was 75-75. Not many minutes earlier, the Italians had been 10 points ahead. Maccabi had possession, but Moti Daniel fumbled badly and the 9,000-strong crowd, all on its feet, let out a collective groan which could have been heard all the way in Jerusalem.

However, the fighting Maccabeans regained possession and the ubiquitous Radisav Curcic got the ball back to Guy Goodes, standing well outside the three-point circle. Goodes sank one of the best three-point shots seen this season at Yad Eliyahu and Maccabi shot ahead to 78-75 with 16 seconds left.

Pesaro roared forward on attack, and Maccabi fouled its playmaker, American Corey Gaines. Up until then, Gaines had a six out of seven record from the line, but he missed when it counted most.

Now, it was Maccabi's turn to take the ball on the offense. The Italians, in desperation, fouled Norris Coleman. The stick-thin Maccabi player kept his cool and made both shots to cement the Israeli champion's win.

It can be argued that Maccabi had a lot of luck - especially in the last minute. It can also be said that the Italians were the better team for most of the game and that a lot of the referees' decisions seemed to be tilted against them.

However, nobody can deny that Maccabi came back when things were going against the team - and that alone is a significant, refreshing change for the men in yellow.

There are still three games to go in the final pool and anything can happen - but last night's win to say the least can do no harm to Maccabi's chances of being among the four teams to advance to the next round after 17

JOEL GORDIN

games, Maccabi is 6-5, tied with CSKA Moscow and behind Pesaro, Panathinaikos and Real Madrid.

Maccabi held the Italians reasonably well in the first half. The Israelis prevented their opponents from getting the ball inside to the dreaded 2-meter plus Walter Magnifico. Pesaro played without its injured playmaker Fredrico Fieri, but Gaines was a good enough stand-in - fast, athletic and to the point.

Maccabi's real strength in this half was in the rebounds. Curcic, Nadav Henefeld and Coleman did sterling work, both on offense and defense. Curcic was also a pillar of strength in the shooting department, making up for Doron Jamchee's lack of form.

The close halftime score of 41-40 (for Maccabi) about reflected the run of play.

Pesaro had the upper hand through most of the second half - even though it did not play its best. Maccabi lost possession three times in succession and if Pesaro had a low shooting average, Maccabi's was worse.

The culprit here was Jamchee, who only hit four out of his 10 shots from the field. At times, it was only Curcic's fighting spirit which seemed to keep Maccabi in the game.

Mainly as a result of capitalizing on Maccabi's mistakes, Pesaro rolled ahead to 61-51 with five minutes to go. This is usually the point where Maccabi rolls over to die.

However, Henefeld scored five fiery points in succession, and Daniel smacked in a magnificent three-pointer. Curcic added another three-pointer and Maccabi was looking at 75-72. Yet another three by Daniel and the score was 75-75, setting the stage for the magnificent, heart-stopping end.

Curcic led Maccabi's scoring with 24 points, followed by the three intrepid fighters, Coleman (14), Henefeld (13), and Daniel (10). Jamchee disappointed with 12.

For the Italians, Gaines did well to score 28, Sandro Dalmello made 15 and Magnifico, strongly guarded by Henefeld and Curcic, had to settle for 13.

In other action last night, host CSKA Moscow beat Real Madrid 84-82 (40-49). Igor Kudelin led the Russians with 18 points and Joe Arlauckas had 27 for the losers.

European Club Championships

Group A	W	L	Pts.
1. Panathinaikos	8	3	19
2. Scavolini Pesaro	8	3	18
3. Real Madrid	7	4	18
4. CSKA Moscow	6	5	17
5. Maccabi Tel Aviv	6	5	17
6. PAKK Sarajevo	4	7	15
7. Olimpia Lubiana	3	8	14
8. Benfica Lisbon	2	9	13

TODAY ON CABLE TV

CHANNEL 5

7:00 Bodies in motion 7:30 Bodies in motion 8:00 Bodies in motion 8:30 College basketball 10:30 Super Bowl XXXI highlights 12:30 College basketball 13:30 Spanish league soccer 15:00 WWF 16:00 All sports 16:30 (to be announced) 17:00 Basketball magazine 17:30 Mondial 18:30 College basketball: Connecticut v Miami 19:30 Israeli soccer magazine 20:00 Euro-sports 20:30 European basketball 22:00 European soccer magazine 23:00 English league soccer 00:30 European soccer: Arsenal v Milan

EUROSPORT

8:00 Motor racing 9:30 Olympic magazine 10:30 Figure skating 12:00 Snowboard 12:30 Live women's alpine skiing 14:00 Live freestyle skiing 15:00 Live women's figure skating 18:00 Alpine skiing 19:00 Women's figure skating 20:00 Live figure skating 20:45 Eurosport news 21:15 Live freestyle skiing 23:00 Alpine skiing 00:30 Boxing 1:00 International motor racing magazine 2:00 Eurosport news

PRIME SPORTS

5:00 Asian soccer 8:00 International motor racing magazine 9:00 Cricket from India 10:00 European soccer 11:00 WWF 12:00 Asian soccer show 13:00 Snooker 13:30 NBA behind the scenes 14:00 NBA: Seattle v Orlando 16:00 Golf 17:00 Asian soccer 19:30 Cricket from Australia 20:30 Snooker 21:00 Snooker 22:00 Asian soccer show 23:00 Golf 00:30 WWF 1:00 Cricket: Australia v England

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 4

CHANNEL 5

8:30 Table tennis 9:30 Spanish league soccer 11:00 Mondial 11:30 English league soccer 13:30 European soccer magazine 14:00 World rugby 14:30 Handball 15:30 Volleyball 16:30 Basketball: Connecticut v Miami 18:00 Big Bear post-kaball 19:00 WWF 20:00 Super Bowl 21:30 NBA 22:00 Israeli soccer 23:00 Mondial 23:30 (to be announced)

EUROSPORT

8:30 Tokyo Open tennis 12:00 Live men's alpine skiing 14:00 Live freestyle skiing 15:00 Live figure skating 16:00 Swimming from Paris 18:00 Alpine skiing 19:30 Ski jumping 20:00 Cross country skiing 21:30 Figure skating 23:00 Alpine skiing 00:30 Golf from Australia 2:00 International motor racing magazine

PRIME SPORTS

5:00 NBA: Seattle v Orlando 8:00 Cricket: Australia v England 9:00 Live golf from Australia 12:00 Show jumping 13:00 European soccer show 14:00 WWF 15:00 Power magazine 15:30 Snooker 16:30 Live Five Nations rugby: England v France 18:00 Five Nations rugby: Scotland v Ireland 19:30 Power boats 20:00 Cricket: Australia v England 21:00 Golf from Australia 00:00 European soccer show 1:00 Cricket: Australia v England

SCOREBOARD

NHL - Wednesday's results: Pittsburgh 4, N.Y. Rangers 3; Hartford 2, Ottawa 1; Dallas 5, Anaheim 2; Calgary 2, Detroit 1; Chicago 1, Edmonton 0; Toronto 4, Vancouver 4.

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43-12029

Ethiopian olim form independent sports body

DAVID RUDGE

ETHIOPIAN athletes have established their own independent sports body to help them train for next year's Olympic games, in defiance of existing sports organizations.

The group of 25 athletes, who have taken the unprecedented step, believe some of them have a good chance of making Israel's Olympic team and doing well in the games, provided they can train and compete properly.

"We have the same attributes as other runners from Ethiopia, who are among the best in the world, and we can reach their level provided we get the right kind of support and encouragement," said Rahamin Gasha, one of the founding members of the new sports body.

"Unfortunately, athletics (track) is not one of the favored sports here, unlike football and basketball, and its very difficult to get the right kind of financial backing to equip runners and enable them to take time off from work to train," he said.

Gasha, from Kiryat Gat, was the second-placed Israeli in the recent Tiberias Marathon, behind

teammate Asaf Bimro, who is also a member of the new independent sports body.

Dr. Chaim Peri, chairman of the "Be'Hevrat" voluntary association of veteran Israelis for Ethiopian immigrants, is helping the athletes to get the new organization off the ground and seek sponsors.

Peri said the Jewish Federation of Atlanta, where the Olympics are to be held next year, had already offered to help the athletes and had suggested hosting participants prior to the games. The Atlanta federation has close links with the Yemin Order youth aliyah village on Mount Carmel, of which Peri is the director.

"These young athletes are highly motivated and are consumed with the desire to bring honor to the Israel and the Ethiopian community, as well as themselves and their immediate families," said Peri.

The new sports body, known as "Ha'Zvi" (the Deer), has, with the help of Be'Hevrat, already contacted Deputy Education Minister MK Micha Goldman and public bodies for help.

Blackburn extends lead despite loss of Flowers

LONDON (Reuters) - Blackburn Rovers extended their lead at the top of the Premier League to five points on Wednesday when, after having goalkeeper Tim Flowers sent off, they drew 1-1 with Leeds.

Blackburn lost Flowers after only two minutes of the game for a professional foul but took the lead four minutes later when England striker Alan Shearer netted his 27th goal of the season.

Shearer's strike came from a penalty and consolidated his position as the top scorer in the Premier League. He has now scored 24 league goals.

Blackburn's hopes of victory and a luxurious seven-point lead were upset five minutes from time when Scottish international midfielder Gary McAllister equalized for Leeds, also from a penalty.

The result left Blackburn with 59 points from 26 games and a healthy advantage over rival and defending champion Manchester United which has 54 points from the same number of games.

Newcastle, which removed Blackburn from the FA Cup two weeks ago, moved back up to

third place with a comfortable 2-0 win over struggling Everton, which was reduced to nine men after having two sent off in the second half.

Defender Earl Barrett, making his Everton debut after a £1.7 million transfer from Aston Villa was dismissed for two bookable offenses after 61 minutes.

His teammate Barry Horne, also for two cautionable fouls, leaving Newcastle with a relatively easy task.

Newcastle turned its numerical superiority into goals with strikes from winger Ruel Fox after 74 minutes and a penalty from veteran England forward Peter Beardsley 10 minutes from the end.

On a night of contentious decisions and red cards, Flowers was dismissed by referee Rodger Gifford for tripping Leeds striker Brian Deane.

Substitute goalkeeper Bobby Mimms came on for Blackburn and, though reduced to 10 men, it managed to take control.

WEDNESDAY'S RESULTS: Blackburn 1, Leeds 1; Newcastle 2, Everton 0.

Local soccer leaders face light opposition

DEREK FATTAL

THE National League's title-contenders resumed the season with all cylinders burning, as they each marked convincing wins last week in a lively return from the month-long winter break.

The results maintained the status quo at the top, and the formbook suggests a similar outcome for Round 17 this weekend as the three leaders all have relatively easy fixtures against opponents from the lower half of the table.

Maccabi Tel Aviv should get the better of Maccabi Netanya, with the in-form Eli Driks leading the charge in attack, against a Netanya side without Igor Shkvin to bolster its defense.

A slip by the Tel Avivians is likely to restore champion Maccabi Haifa to the head of the division for the first time this season. The Haifaite were on song last weekend, whipping Maccabi Herzliya 4-1, with a searing second-half display, and could mete out the same sort of punishment tomorrow at home to Maccabi Petah Tikva. The visitors held Haifa to a 1-1 draw at the start of the season, but the Haifaite look to have regained the rhythm that captured the imagination in the last campaign.

Carmelo Mishish scored a

dream goal from the halfway line last week for third-placed Hapoel Petah Tikva. The Maccabi Herzliya defense will be praying that Mishish's shooting skills will be rather more blunted this weekend.

Hapoel Tel Aviv hosts Hapoel Haifa in what promises to be an interesting fixture at Bloomfield. Moshe Sinai's young home-grown side continues to draw applause while the multi-million dollar charges under the command of Haifa coach Dror Kashatan lurch from one crisis to another.

National League weekend fixtures (all matches kick off tomorrow 15.00, unless otherwise stated): Maccabi Netanya vs. Maccabi Tel Aviv (12), Herzliya, 18.00; Maccabi Haifa vs. Maccabi Petah Tikva (11), Kiryat Elimezer; Hapoel Petah Tikva vs. Maccabi Herzliya (22), Petah Tikva; Hapoel Tel Aviv vs. Hapoel Haifa (32); Bloomfield; Ironi Ashdod vs. Hapoel Be'er Sheva (11), Ashdod 15.30; Be'er Yehuda vs. Bnei Yehuda (31), Batkiva Quarter; Zefratim Holon vs. Hapoel Be'er Sheva, Holon; Ironi Rishon vs. Bnei Tel Aviv, (31)

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SPORTS BRIEFS

Raiders sack Shell

Art Shell was fired as coach of the Los Angeles Raiders yesterday and will be replaced by assistant Mike White. Shell, an American Pro Football Hall of Famer player with the Raiders who coached the team for six years, was the first black coach in modern NFL history. He had been with the Raiders for 27 seasons as a player, assistant and coach.

Baseball owners drop salary cap for tax
Facing growing political pressure to end the baseball strike, owners made a major shift Wednesday when they abandoned their salary cap proposal for a luxury tax.

The new offer, made as talks resumed after a 40-day break, moved the owners off their central demand to reduce player salaries to 50 percent of revenue.

Union officials said the size of the luxury tax in Wednesday's offer was unacceptable, but the structure could lead to an agreement if owners are willing to substantially reduce the tax rates.

Sluggish Arsenal, Milan draw in Super Cup

LONDON (Reuters) - Arsenal and AC Milan, both troubled by off-field problems, produced a largely uninspiring European Super Cup first leg which ended in a 0-0 draw at Highbury on Wednesday.

Apart from a flurry of chances on either side of halftime, two of the most disciplined defenses in Europe rarely looked like giving anything away.

The biggest cheer of the night came 16 minutes from time when Arsenal's Paul Merson came on as a substitute for Kevin Campbell, marking the end of his three-month absence from the team following admission of alcohol and gambling addiction and cocaine use.

But he played only a bit part in the final act.

The mood of the evening was set by a

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ON THURSDAYS:

- The Post's "agony aunt" Ruth Blum answers readers' questions.
- Intelligence experts Uri Dan and Dennis Eisenberg give you inside stories of international intrigue.

Ben-Menahem's immunity may be lifted

THE Knesset House Committee will on Monday discuss lifting the parliamentary immunity of Deputy Housing Minister Eli Ben-Menahem (Labor), so he can stand trial on charges of assaulting a minor.

Attorney-General Michael Ben-Yair submitted the draft indictment against Ben-Menahem, along with a request to lift his

immunity, to the Knesset on Wednesday. By House rules, the House Committee must discuss such a request at the first session after it is received.

The draft indictment relates to two incidents which occurred in Kfar Shalem last election day, June 23, 1992. Ben-Menahem got into an argument with several Likud activists at the ballot box,

EVELYN GORDON

and shoved several of them. As a result of the shoving, a 15-year-old girl was knocked to the ground, and her fingers were seriously injured.

Later, Ben-Menahem allegedly attacked another 15-year-old girl, yanking her hair. As a result, she also fell down and hit her

head, causing significant injury. Assaulting a minor carries a maximum sentence of five years in prison for each charge.

Before he can even be tried, however, both the House Committee and the Knesset plenum must agree to lift his immunity. By law, an MK cannot be tried on any criminal charge without the Knesset's consent.

Ben-Menahem was unavailable for comment last night.

Ben-Yair, who received the charge sheet against Ben-Menahem about six months ago from State Attorney Dorit Beinisch, held a hearing for the deputy minister, but remained unconvinced and decided to press charges.

Michal Yudelman contributed to this report.

Suspects in St. Petersburg robbery remanded

RAINE MARCUS

FIVE men suspected of being involved in stealing texts and manuscripts valued at around \$300 million in St. Petersburg, Russia, in December were remanded for 10 days by the Petah Tikva Magistrate's Court yesterday.

A sixth suspect was remanded for five days.

Police said that a lawyer and former Russian army general, Dmitri Ya'akovsky, had apparently organized the heist and had planned to hire a private plane to fly out the five suspects with the manuscripts, which had been stolen from the National Museum. He was arrested and is still in detention in Russia.

Some 90 texts were recovered by Russian police and several other suspects there were arrested.

Dr. Irit Levday, 40, wife of another suspect, Victor Levday, was remanded for only five days. Police alleged that she acted as a translator for two other suspects, Zion Levy and David Kabiri, while they were in St. Petersburg at the time of the robbery. But her lawyer, Avi Oren, said she believed the two were trading illegally in Judaica.

Victor Levday, 55, was a curator at the museum before the couple immigrated here three



One of the suspects in the St. Petersburg robbery is brought to court yesterday. (Rof/Israel Sm)

years ago.

Supt. Yehuda Olial told the court that although Victor Levday was not in St. Petersburg at the time of the robbery, he passed on inside information to the other suspects about security arrangements at the museum.

Levday, said Olial, told Levy,

Kabiri and David Asur that there was no burglar alarm in the department where the texts were kept. He denied all allegations.

Levy allegedly rented an apartment from a Jewish family in St. Petersburg to store the bags containing the stolen texts. After the robbery, said Olial, three bags

were kept in the apartment and two were stored at the family's own home.

In fact, the family informed Russian police after they heard the news of the robbery, and the texts were seized by St. Petersburg police.

Kabiri allegedly worked to-

gether with Levy, said Olial. But their lawyer, Ze'ev Gordon, said the two were not involved in the robbery and had traveled to Russia on bona-fide business.

"They returned on a regular flight and made no attempt to hide," said Gordon.

He also questioned the authority of an Israeli court to try the suspects for an offense committed in Russia, and said it is doubtful the Russian Ministry of Justice would send prosecution witnesses here to testify.

Asur also denied the allegations, saying he met the other suspects by chance in St. Petersburg after a barroom brawl.

The last suspect, Haim Taub, is suspected of renting a car in St. Petersburg to transfer the stolen texts. Police said he admitted transporting the goods.

Police said that more arrests are imminent, and asked that the suspects' photographs not be published, until they are sent to Russia for identification by witnesses.

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Eilat police arrest young pot dealers

EILAT police have found dozens of 12- and 13-year-olds using and selling marijuana in the town.

Eilat police chief Dep.-Cmdr. Shlomo Tzoref said the police launched a quick investigation following an anonymous phone tip.

One boy has been arrested and charged with distributing marijuana in a local junior high school. So far, eight girls from the school have been arrested and have confessed to drug charges.

Another 20 youths have been called in for questioning on Sunday. (tim)

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Yeroham pupils kept home by parents

AMIR ROZENBLIT

PARENTS at a Yeroham elementary school began keeping their children home yesterday to protest a serious shortage of teachers, especially in basic subjects like English.

The shortage at the United School was exacerbated recently when five teachers took maternity leave. A special education teacher also recently left the school for other reasons.

The school hired instead several university students and high school graduates, which angered the parents enough to call the strike.

"We will not stop the strike unless we get a special education teacher, which we have not had for a month-and-a-half," said Rami Etias, the head of the parents committee, who said the school has suffered a shortage of certified teachers for a long time.

District director Dr. Amram Melitz said an attempt is being made to find qualified teachers to serve as substitutes, but that "the chances for that are not high."

He said that of the United School's 48 teachers, only four are not certified, and several have academic degrees. "These data show that the percentage of uncertified teachers in the school is low compared to any other town in the district, and maybe in the country."

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Mild weather to end today

DAVID RUDGE and Itim

terday sent a letter to Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands, expressing Israel's concern at the reports coming in of the destruction caused by flooding in Holland.

The Foreign Ministry announced that 85 portable pumps to remove water from flooded houses would be sent there as

soon as possible.

The Meteorological Service said the unseasonably high temperatures would fall today, dropping even further tomorrow, with the advent of rain from the South.

The rain is expected to spread from the center of the country to the North by tomorrow night, and continue on Sunday and probably Monday.

Sanctions at B-G

Seven flights were delayed and passengers had to wait several hours at passport control when worker meetings were held at Ben-Gurion Airport yesterday afternoon between 12:30 and 3. The meetings were called to protest what workers said was a drop of between NIS 200 and NIS 300 in their net wages as a result of new tax changes. tim

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